UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Barbara

The Development of Writing Centers in Japanese Higher Education

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Education

by

Erika I-Tremblay

Committee in charge:
Professor Charles Bazerman, Chair
Professor Karen Lunsford
Professor Kate McDonald

September 2017

The dissertation of Erika I-Tremblay is approved.

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Kate McDonald

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Karen Lunsford

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Charles Bazerman, Committee Chair

May 2017

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to the following individuals:

My faculty advisor and Dissertation Committee Chair, Dr. Charles Bazerman

Dissertation Committee member, Dr. Karen Lunsford

Dissertation Committee member, Dr. Kate McDonald

Writing educators, tutors, and students writers who participated in the study

My husband, Alex Tremblay

And

My parents, Yasuo and Sayomi I

Thank you.

VITA OF ERIKA I-TREMBLAY

May 2017

EDUCATION

Associate Degree in Liberal Arts, Southern New Hampshire University, Manchester, NH, May 2003 (Presidential Scholar)

Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH, August 2005 (cum laude)

Master of Arts in English with a Specialization in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, San Francisco State University, Santa Barbara, December 2010

Master of Arts in Education, University of California, Santa Barbara, June 2014

Doctor of Philosophy in Education, University of California, Santa Barbara, September 2017

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

2007 - 2008: Japanese Language Program Coordinator, Japan Society of Northern California, San Francisco, CA

2010 – 2011: Instructor, American Language Institute, San Francisco State University

2011- 2013: Writing Tutor, Cartwright Learning Resources Center, Santa Barbara City College

2015 – 2016: Adjunct Faculty, Brooks Institute, Ventura, CA

2016-17: Teaching Assistant, Writing Program, University of California, Santa Barbara

2013- 2017: Teaching Assistant, Japanese Program, East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies Department, University of California, Santa Barbara

AWARDS

Graduate Student Travel Grant, University of California, Santa Barba

Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, University of California, Santa Barbara (Nominated)

Dissertation Block Grant, The Gevirtz Graduate School of Education, University of California, Santa Barbara

ABSTRACT

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This dissertation introduces the concept of *literate histories* as a way of looking into a student writer's path as a developing writer and their relationship with writing activities and institutions that sponsor writing. Using the concept of *literate histories* as an analytical lens, this dissertation examines how the US-born idea of writing centers had entered and is spreading in the changing Japanese higher educational system. Specifically, through a detailed examination of university writing centers, it aims to understand the growing exigency of writing in Japanese higher education and how writing centers can serve as sponsors of writing to student writers in an evolving context. The writing center movement has its roots in progressive education, however, the writing center has historically been associated with remedial work in the U.S. The writing center movement has spread to Japan, and universities across Japan are taking the initiative to advance the idea of fostering independent writers through one-on-one instruction at the writing center. Through ethnographic observations of tutoring sessions and interviews, this research presents an alternative view of the writing center. Specifically, through the lens of *literate histories*, it demonstrates how the writing center can serve as sponsors of writing to university student writers of diverse backgrounds. From this view, the writing center work is no longer remedial but is a resource that may help students in enacting disciplinary identities through

the teaching of writing. Finally, writing center researchers have emphasized the importance of replicable, aggregable, and data-support (RAD) research in recent years. This dissertation, which offers a historical account of teaching of writing in Japanese education, offers a methodological contribution to writing center research by adding new codes to analyze tutor-tutee conversations and in turn, aims to advance writing center work.

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I. Introduction

Growing up in Japan and coming to the US as a teenager, I have had opportunities to experience both systems of education, and these experiences provided me with awareness about how teaching of writing may vary in different cultural contexts. Further, I have had a pleasure of working with individual student writers as a writing tutor. Having been a tutor myself, I have discovered one-on-one writing conferencing to be a powerful and useful means of interacting with student writers. These *histories* (the discussion on the plurality of the word to follow in a later section) lead me to certain kinds of questions. For example, how is writing taught in Japanese universities? If writing was not taught, should it be modeled after the US system (e.g., First-Year Composition and writing centers)? Or, how might the US perspective on teaching of writing enter the Japanese context? Once I learned that the writing center practices had emerged and were expanding in a Japanese university setting, I used those questions as points of embarkation to seek answer to the question, how writing centers are developing in ways that is consistent with the Japanese system of education.

My preliminary interviews with writing center professional revealed that the idea of the writing was new to the cultural context of Japan.「ライティングセンターって何？何するところ？」（“WHAT is the writing center? What do you do there?” (personal communication, December 2014, My translation.) These are the kinds of response that many Japanese writing educators receive from their colleagues when they bring up the idea of opening a writing center on their campuses. Writing, especially to more senior members of a Japanese academic community, is something that each student writer must figure out on their own or should be taught by their academic advisers. This tradition of mentorship and

passing down the knowledge within ゼミ (*zemi* or a "seminar" group that is led by a faculty member) is prevalent in the Japanese universities, and in this culture, a specialized class or institution that focus on the teaching of writing is almost unheard of. Yet, the idea of writing center is spreading in Japan. The first university writing center opened in 2004, and there are now at least a dozen writing centers across Japan (Writing Center Association). Through the lens of *literate histories*, a concept that is original to this dissertation, the present research examines how Japanese university student writers' paths as developing writers intersect with writing centers. The writing center is an idea which was imported from the West (a further discussion of the importation of writing centers to follow in a later section). However, in the US from where the idea of the writing center originates, such location has been associated with remedial work (see *Emergence of Writing Centers in the US* section). The Japanese are adapting the idea of the writing center and developing it, so that it is consistent with their historical and cultural contexts. This dissertation will examine how the idea of the writing center is realized in the Japanese university setting by offering a: 1) Contrast with the US model; 2). Comparison of tutoring strategies between two languages within a center; and a 3） Comparison between two writing centers in Japan.

In order to understand how the writing center practices began, the next section provides a brief overview of the context in which the writing center emerged in the US.

Emergence of Writing Centers in the US

American higher education began expanding in the late nineteenth century, and by the 1920s, American universities were struck with student populations which were becoming growingly diverse. The writing center movement emerged in the U.S. around the same time as a response to the needs of growing student population. The idea of the writing

center was influenced by the idea of writing labs. During the American progressive education period of the 1920s, there was a renowned interest in reforming writing education. Education specialists considered the teacher-centered method of teaching writing to be "inadequate," and they became interested in "hands-on learning and social interaction" (Learner, 2009, p. 3). This orientation towards experiential learning (Russell, 1991) influenced university composition classes and in this context, a laboratory method, which called for more personalized instruction, became popular. As a later section reveals, the writing center work has historically been challenging for various reasons. However, this laboratory method of teaching of writing has been adapted by US universities and colleges. In the present day, many writing centers on the US university and college campuses offer writing support in the form of peer (and near-peer) tutoring, and/or they offer their versions of the writing center as an additional support system to their student writers.

American higher education in its history witnessed a few more instances of sudden surge of student population; between the 1920s and 30s, and the 60s when returning soldiers started attending colleges after the passages of the GI Bill. In addition, the popular open admission concept drew the population of students who had never attended college or higher education. These times of expansion, however, invited waves of criticism that American college students could not write. Writing centers, which once offered personalized instruction to student writers in need, were transformed into sites where under-achieving students were sent to practice writing through drilling exercises. Thus, writing center work became associated with remedial work.

The field of composition was newly professionalized in the 1980s, and at that time, writing scholars began arguing that every discipline had its own discursive community.

Further, they argued that the responsibility of teaching writing should be divided among faculty rather than solely relying on the English department. Writing center professionals colluded with this Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) movement to remove the teaching of writing from a literary curriculum of the English department, and today, writing center activities are more visible on American university and college campuses. The writing center serve as driving forces to share the responsibility of teaching writing, and for many institutions, the writing center is their writing program. Further as Brandt (2001) contends, "As democratic institutions, schools must serve to stabilize and attempt to augment the value and development of all forms of literacy learning" (p. 186). The writing center as an institution can and has been assisting those students who may otherwise be left behind in a mainstream approach (which can also be described as standardized) to teaching writing. In this sense, the writing center can serve as a sponsor of writing to those student writers who may or may not benefit from a classroom approach to teaching of writing. The idea of writing center has been exported, and the writing center activities around the globe has become a topic of discussion in major conferences concerning writing, such as Research on Writing Across the Boarders and the Conference in College Composition and Communication. This study focuses on the development of writing centers in the Japanese higher educational context. Through an examination of the Japanese example, this dissertation research offers an alternative definitions of the writing center, and in turn, considers what the writing center can afford.

The next section offers a brief overview of the writing center in the Japanese context. Specifically, it discusses how the idea of writing center fits within the higher educational context. While the idea of individual instruction may seem obscure to the Japanese cultural

and school contexts, where there are so much emphasis on group harmony, the idea of the writing center has arrived to Japan and is expanding. Due to a massive expansion in the recent decades, Japanese higher education is no longer reserved for the elites. Students from various social, cultural, and economical backgrounds are entering the Japanese university, and in this changing context, the writing center may also be able to serve as a sponsor of literacy who will assist Japanese university student writers in a successful completion of their education and in preparation for a civic life.

Writing Centers in the Japanese Context

Writing centers began appearing on Japanese university campuses in the early 2000s. The idea of university writing centers may be unfamiliar to the Japanese because, first, college writing course are not widely spread. In fact, Japanese university students are caught in this paradox in which they receive little (if any) instruction of writing up until an entry into higher education. However, once they become university students, they are expected to produce academic prose of their own as members of particular discourse communities. In this setting, the writing center can serve as an institution which nurtures academic writers who can write independently.

Another reason why the idea of writing center may be foreign in Japan is because one-on-one instruction could draw an association with elitism. For example, in the early twentieth century when government-sponsored higher education was reserved for the male elites, wealthy families hired tutors for their sons and daughters. In the contemporary era, being a *kateikyoshi* (home teacher) to a junior or high school student preparing for an entrance examination is a great way to make money for college students. However, not all

families can afford a private tutor for their sons or daughters. Thus, families must achieve a certain level of socioeconomic status to be able to hire a *kateikyoshi*.

The US writing center model of peer (or near-peer) tutoring complicates the picture further. In an exam-oriented, competitive setting, the notion of peer tutoring may be intelligible to many Japanese students. Learning from peers has a lot of face involved; while individuals want to be successful, Japanese students may not want to stand out as a "less-capable" (or a "high achieving," in the case of being a tutor) peer. Additionally, the notion of peer tutoring is unfamiliar because in Japanese schools, teacher remains the authoritative figure.

The US-based idea of writing center has entered Japan, and examining the writing center activities will provide clues to understand the way writing is taught in the university level, in terms of approach and a language of writing. For example, some Japanese university students are required to write in English as part of their curricular requirements. Nevertheless, writing is not often explicitly taught as a subject, and students are often expected to learn to write academically from working closely with his or her faculty mentor. Because of this cultural orientation (which does not necessarily view writing as a subject of study), some universities are reluctant to invest on resources and expenses to open writing centers. Thus, a research on writing center activities will make visible cultural challenges of writing in Japan and expand the US definition of writing centers to include the idea of a sponsor of literacy in order to understand new roles of writing in higher education in the twenty-first century Japan.

The Study

This study examines the development of writing centers in Japan. Through an ethnographic observation of tutoring sessions and interviewing, this research focuses on the roles of writing centers in Japanese university students' process of becoming academic writers. Specifically, this study seeks to find out how the US-born idea of the writing center serves as a sponsor of writing and evolves in the present-day Japanese context in order to improve student writing. As for the tutor, a special kind of training may be required to interpret the relationship with writing center visitors who are their peers (or near-peers). Ultimately, this research aims to offer insights into developing effective tutor training strategies through an understanding of the role of university writing centers in Japan.

Despite its advancement in other parts of the world, writing center scholarship continues to be US-centric. This research brings a transnational perspective to the broad Writing Studies field by describing in detail how a writing center can serve as a sponsor of writing to Japanese university student writers and by contrasting with the US model. In addition to the interviews about individual experiences, this study pays particular attention to tutor-tutee interactions. Mackiewicz and Thompson's (2015) lament that "writing center researchers have barely begun the much-needed systematic, empirical analysis of the ways writing center tutors talk to student writers during writing conferences" (p. 1). This research fills that gap by focusing on an analysis of tutor-tutee conversations.

University writing centers became popular in the United States in the 1980s, and they quickly spread all over North America. In Japan, however, the writing center is a new idea and its expansion will likely take a completely different course from the North American case. An examination of an advancement of writing center work in Japan points to

efforts made by writing educators who were either from or educated in the West. Examining the work of these key players whose work is dedicated to improve student-writing through writing center practices provides clues to understand the growing exigency of writing in higher education in Japan, and in turn, lessons may be learned to rethink writing center practices in the US.

In order to discuss the writing center movement in Japan, the larger context of this study must be identified. Thus, the following section offers a brief history of modern Japanese education and discusses why the study of writing centers is relevant to at this particular point in the history of Japanese education.

Japanese Education – From Primary to Secondary Education

When American higher education was undergoing a major shift in the late nineteenth century, there was also a major movement in the history of modern Japanese education. With a slogan "*Fukoku, Kyohei,"* the Meiji government strived to create a modern nation that would take a leading role in Asia, and the government used compulsory education as a means to instill national consciousness of *kokutai.* The Meiji education, and specifically, its multitrack schooling was a highly stratified system and did not, in general, allow room for social mobility; access to middle and higher schools was a privilege to only a handful of elite males, and the sons of farmers were to remain farmers. In addition, the Meiji schooling taught girls to become "*ryosai, kenbo (good wife, wise mother)*". In other words according to Meiji schooling, everyone had a prescribed set of duties to fulfill and the level of education a pupil should receive was based on the occupation of the head of a household and gender.

By the Showa era, the Meiji doctrine had cemented and schooling continued to produce obedient citizens. During the Second World War, teaching principles had become

ultranationalistic and militaristic, and by the time the war was over, Allied Occupation called Japanese education "the source of evils." A postwar education reform is a controversial topic, and there are at least two views; one accepts that an assessment report prepared by a group of American educational specialists (i.e., the Mission) was a source of postwar education reform, and another views that postwar education reform was coerced by the Allied Powers, specifically that it was an American exercise of imperial power (Tsuchimochi, 1993). The system's reform was a threat to the people of the elite class who had traditionally assumed the leading roles of the society. In fact, as soon as the Occupation left Japan, these traditionalists began their efforts to repel any changes that were made during the postwar reform. Tsuchimochi (1993), however, shows that postwar education reform, in fact, was a realization of a joint effort between the American and the Japanese. In fact, the postwar education reform opened up doors to many Japanese children who would have otherwise not received education.

The Fundamental Law of Education was written under the influence of the Allied Occupation in 1947. It mandated all citizen regardless of gender, religion, and socio-economic status to receive nine years of compulsory education. The idea of "democratic" education brought the principle of "equal opportunity for all" and allowed children of families from lower-socioeconomic status to pursue upward social mobility.

The term 'democratic' in the Japanese schooling context is also a concept that is worth exploring. When the Allied Occupational force took over Japan, one of the first things that Japanese school children were instructed to do was to cover with black ink (i.e., *suminuru*) any militaristic and ultra-nationalistic ideas which predominated in the Japanese textbooks. This incident had a significant impact on school children who witnessed how the

very concepts that occupied their classroom and an everyday teaching could be dismantled. Up until this moment, children were taught to be a subject to an absolute, authoritative figure. Yet, the defeat of the war compelled them to recognize ideological terms which were unfamiliar to them. Each one of the students now had a potential to exceed the bounds of socioeconomic backgrounds and/or gender, and education would provide the path to this autonomy. Furthermore, the act of *doing* the erasing itself, from a Deweyan perspective, had a powerful influence on the students in a way that it demonstrated a message that they can be a part of an ideological change or they can *be* the change. Although they were instructed to black out these ideas, the act of *suminuru* proved that there were no absolute ideas and that rules can be challenged.

The Mission viewed idea of "democratic education" slightly differently. The members viewed higher education as the "crown" of an ever modern education system and its functions in society included preservation of freedom of scholarship; thought and research and contribution to society through its pursuit of truth; general education and young men and women to prepare them for positions of leadership in society; training for technical competence and proficiency in professions (Tsuchimochi, 1993). Thus, opportunities to pursue education must be expanded to all Japanese citizens. This idea was welcomed by the Japanese. Tominaga (1980) explains that during the postwar period, there was a correlation between a father's occupation (and the cultural capital of the household), as well as the geographical location where the family lived and his child's educational attainment. However, as more and more workers began to enter industries after graduating from high school and postsecondary schools, a student's educational aspiration (rather than his/her family background) became a factor in the highest education attained and the subsequent

social status achieved by the level of education (Tominaga, 1980). Thus, the common belief was that, "If you work hard, you can achieve upward social mobility."

Educational opportunities continued to grow and coincided with the massive economic growth in the 1960s. Allison (1996) explains education as the "apparatus for pedagogical and ideological indoctrination" (p. 87). As students go through schooling, the ideology that 'school is fair because it is based on individual achievment' becomes dominant. Also *ganbareba dekiru* ('all is capable *if they put their mind to it*'), a uniquely Japanese ideology, penetrates the school system, and it continued to draw students into higher schooling into the 70s. The 'massification' of high school education continued in the 70s and schooling remained competitive until severe criticisms (such as competitive schooling was causing delinquency and bullying) started to emerge.

"The image of the ideal Japanese" is a public document published by the Ministry of Education in 1966. While celebrating the Japanese economic prosperity of the 1960s, the document laments that the Japanese have become "hedonistic" and have fallen into "a spiritual vacuum," and in such a time, the "'humanity' of man must be elevated." Further, an ideal Japanese is a unique male individual who knows and exercises his talents and in turn accepts responsibilities. He is a family man who educates the young and who contributes to society as workforce. An ideal citizen conforms to the social norm and is patriotic. Women are assigned to domestic roles. Finally, an ideal Japanese knows Japanese traditions and history. Today, an image of an ideal Japanese is embedded in the government's curriculum guidelines and language policies. For example, although the Constitution does not specify any variety as an official language, the national language (*kokugo*) is considered the marker of Japanese citizenship. Thus, there is a strong tie between language ideology and education.

"The image" document transmits another message: Japanese schooling is a gendered system. Female students and their families have responded rationally (Brinton, 1990) in order to meet the needs of the labor market and its relationship to schooling. For example, because women tend to leave work when they get married or start a family, many large companies prefer hiring male employees than female employees. Furthermore, since male employees have better chances of getting promoted in a company, families contend that it makes sense to send sons, rather than daughters, to higher education. Better educated, male graduates have a higher chance of getting a job. In this cyclical manner, it is irrational for many women to pursue higher education. Nevertheless, women as mothers have a central role in supporting the education system in Japan (i.e., The notion of "*Good Wife, Good Mother*"). For example, in their symbolic act of *obento* (lunch box) making (Allison, 1996), Japanese mothers nurture the hardworking Japanese student whose aim is to enter the best university possible. Rather than going to these prestigious universities themselves, Japanese mothers' efforts are paid of then their sons (and daughters) enter these universities.

By the 1980s, Japanese education was in a spotlight as the source of Japan's rapid economic growth, and educational specialists from the West visited Japan to import Japanese pedagogy to their own countries. At the same time, however, the Japanese education system has been criticized from within and outside of Japan for various reasons. For example, some experts argue that the fierce examination system drives students to delinquency or bullying. While these claims may be true, Japanese schooling at various stages perform different functions. Cumming (1980) argues that Japanese education, especially at the early years of primary level, strives to provide "whole-person" education which focuses: "to develop children with pure and rich hearts; to build up strong and healthy

bodies; to promote the spirit of curiosity and intellectual achievement; to encourage the will to endure in whatever is attempted; to help each child to understand how his strengths complement those of this classmates" (p. 13). Japanese schools emphasize "harmony of classroom and the collective feeling that exists among age-mates," and by the time the youth are exposed to the competition in the later part of middle school, Cummings (1980) explains:

> They have already internalized egalitarian values that dispose them to react negatively toward the competitive pressures. Egalitarian values seem to draw youths together, even as the examination system seeks to pull them apart to send them on diverse paths to adulthood. (p. 285)

On the contrary, Rohlen (1975) offers a critical viewpoint and laments that the Japanese education system does not value individuality and the country's humanistic tradition is lost. Rohlen (1975) writes, "the meritocratic qualities of Japan's exam-based system offer a powerful legitimation of the prevailing bureaucratic hierarchies and help socialize individual to accept their future roles within them" (p. 312). Japanese children are taught to blindly accept or conform to the system and often judge their sense of worthiness based on their academic achievements. Rohlen's (1975) belief is that, "public education must preserve and pass on public values, for it is one repository of a nation's identity and sprit. Modern education has a role analogous to the place of religion. Its mission is to teach the nation's ideals" (p. 319). *Ganbarebadekiru* ideology (all is capable *if you put your mind to it*) continues to permeate Japanese society; however, despite the common misconception that Japanese society is homogeneous, Japan is becoming increasingly diverse. Furthermore, while the popular rhetoric of Japanese language as the marker of Japanese citizenship

persists, more and more immigrants and children of immigrants are required to use Japanese in their school- and work-lives. Under these changing contexts, what can Japanese education afford?

A lot has changed in the past one hundred and forty years, and in recent decades, Japan has become a mass education society. Nevertheless, ideologies associated with schooling remain almost the same. What must institutions of Japanese higher education do to accommodate the need of the changing contexts? What are the current trends? Who goes to the university? And for what purpose? While some of these questions will be answered in the later chapters, the following section explores the notions of Japanese universities and university students.

Japanese Universities and Japanese University Students

Dewey, in *My Pedagogical Creed* (1987), writes that education is "a process of living and not a preparation for future living" (p. 7). Despite the influence of the American progressive schooling movement, however, Japanese education is far from process-oriented. In Japan, education *is* a preparation for future living. Throughout their school-life, the Japanese student competes in a system of education that prepares its students for a high-stake university entrance examination. In Japan, one's educational background, particularly from *which* university he or she graduated, determines his or her career, thus the quality of life. Furthermore, Allison (1996) writes that "[s]chool, …, is a totalizing (pre)occupation in Japan, an endeavor that isn't delimited to the school building or school day but is expected to infiltrate and shape the child's everyday life" (p. 106). To a Japanese school child, getting into the "best" university is an ultimate goal and a path way to a successful adulthood. So, what makes a university a "best" institution?

National universities were first established in the late nineteenth century as "institutions to train the nation's elites, and a recruiting grounds for central government ministries" (Ono, 2008, p. 12). As Japan became an industrialized nation during the 1960s and the 1970s, there was a push towards investment in education and in the training of scientists and engineers. Thus, an expansion of higher education was key to economic growth during the 1960s thorough 1975 period. However, as more students began entering into higher education in the 1970s, college education became a "'screening device' of people suitable for industry," and in turn "students were not concerned about the content of their university education but only with the entrance examination and the job market after graduation" (Yamamoto, 1997, p. 299). Being uninspired by the professors who themselves no longer saw the "social relevancy of their teaching" (Yamamoto, 1997, p. 299), Japanese college-life became disengaged from research for the sake of research, for example.

Doyton (2001) reports that since the 1970s, a "new generation of students has been appearing on university campuses" who were "considerably dissimilar to the hard working generation of their parents" (p. 449). These *shinjinrui* (new "breed") refused to conform to social norms (e.g., joining an elite company or working as a government bureaucrat) and began creating new kinds of occupations, such as the Internet start-ups. Doyton (2001) laments, however, that while refusing to participate in mainstream culture is "one small step in expressing one's individuality and autonomy" (p. 451), *shinjinrui* is a manifestation of the modern Japanese higher education system, with so much emphasis on the economic growth of the nation, who paid the price of failing to "cultivate humanity" (Doyton, 2001, p.466) among young Japanese.

Nevertheless, Japanese higher education continued to expand in the following decades. From the mid-1970s to mid-1980s, Japanese higher education saw an unprecedented "unchecked expansion" (Amano, 1997, p. 131), and private institutions responded to the growing demand for higher education by growing in number. Japan has become a mass education society where it is said that there is a university for anyone who wishes (and whose family can afford) to pursue college education – In early 2000s, Ono (2001) estimated that there would be an equal number of available slots in college to the number of applicants wishing to pursue college education by 2009.

Up until the 2000s, the Japanese government invested heavily in the national universities to preserve the research role of the university system, however, in 2001 the state introduced a "radical initiative to privatize national universities," which meant that they now had to compete for resources (Ono, 2008, p. 354). In order to respond to the new funding structures, national universities started working in the new definition of the 'research university' as "a partnership between the university and the corporate sector" (Hawkins and Furuto, 2008, p. 169). At the same time, critics argued that the 'privatization' would "strengthen state control over national universities and deprive them of academic autonomy and freedom" (Okada, 2005). Furthermore, whereas, in the 80s and 90s, a diploma from a prestigious university would guarantee an employee's long-term success in a large corporation (i.e., enterprise-based model), companies began realizing that "in a rapidly changing technological world," they could "no longer afford to solely train their new employees in-house – they need employee who are already to a certain degree trained and skilled and can tackle the problems confronting the modern company" (Doyton, 2001, p. 448). Although there are oppositions among faculty who are against "commercializ[ing]" (p.

171) their research, Hawkings and Furuto (2008) offer the current model of Japanese higher education where there is a:

> partnership between HE and industry, so that industry provides the corporate model of privatization for the universities, and universities, now further unregulated in this regard, will facilitate industry needs through providing skilled human resources, exchanges of Research & Development, and technology transfer. (p. 171)

Private universities have enjoyed their autonomy from government control, and many of them continue to expand and evolve by meeting the needs of changing societal context. For example, many private universities emphasize the concept of internationalization by strengthening their foreign language departments and programs.

The Ministry of Education, Cultures, Sports, Science and Technology – Japan, reports that in 2014, there were 781 four-year universities in Japan. Out of 781 institutions, 86 were national universities, 92 were public, local universities, and 603 were private universities. Statistically speaking, 77.2 percent of all four-year university in Japan during the 2014 – 2015 academic year were private institutions. Further, out of 781 universities, 437 institutions offer doctoral degrees; 77 national, 55 local, and 305 private universities. 69.8 percent of all doctoral degree granting institutions of higher education were private. These numbers suggest that an entrance into national and public universities continue to be competitive. On the other hand, private universities may offer degree programs that may fit the needs of students with wider range of interests and academic abilities.

The number of female researchers provides a clue about a male-female distribution in the academia and related fields. Based on a Ministry of Education report published in 2009, the number of female researcher is on the rise. In 2008, 13 percent of all Japanese

researchers were female (whereas a proportion of female researchers in 1994 was only 8.6 percent). The same report interestingly makes visible, however, that while 64 percent of male researchers work for corporate sectors, 59.8 percent of female researchers are associated with academic sectors. This suggests that although the male dominant view of education may be changing slowly, the male student population may continue to benefit from post-secondary and graduate education in terms of higher income that they may earn from corporate sectors after graduation.

As the brief overview of the history of education revealed, Japanese students (and their families) have responded accordingly to the changing educational contexts, often trying to make the best out of the options available to them. In recent decades, Japanese higher education has been undergoing yet another level of transformation. Owing to an increased publication activities by the Japanese scholars who began contributing to English-medium journals in the 1980s, Japan's top universities have been received international recognition. Further, in the early 2000s, the Japanese government published its intention to foster 30 *world-class* universities in order to increase a chance of entering the "top ten world university ranking" (Yonezawa, 2013). Although the definition of "world-class" is unclear, many universities are interpreting the term synonymously as *global* or *international* and putting an effort in diversifying student population and teaching. Although it may be at a relatively early stage, writing education, specifically English academic writing and teaching of Japanese academic writing which is influenced by English writing instruction, is expanding as a way to foster different kinds of learning (compared to test taking, for example) and to prepare student writers for an international audience. An examination of the writing center is important because it serves as a sponsor of writing in a cultural context

where academic writing has not traditionally been taught explicitly. Such study will help expand the definitions and the idea of the writing center and may provide an insight into understanding the needs of student writers who may be bombarded with a new set of challenges in a changing context.

Overview of the Study

Data collection for this study took place in the summer of 2015 at John Calvin University (pseudonym), a primary site, as well as Western University (pseudonym), a secondary site. (A detailed explanation of the two sites will be provided in the methodology section.) These two sites can serve as representative of institutions of Japanese higher education because 1). John Calvin University is a comprehensive private institution which also offers doctoral degrees, and 2). Western University is a major, national, research university, which houses 11 faculties and 11 graduate schools. This study highlights writing center practices from both private and public, specifically national, sectors of institutions of higher education to offer a broader view of how writing is taught in the Japanese university setting. Alternatively, this study illuminates individual student writers' paths as developing writers through detailed examination of writing center practices.

This research attempts to understand how writing centers can serve as sponsors of writing to Japanese university student writers by analyzing interviews data and tutor-tutee conversations. The WAC movement has spread to Japan and in the last decade, university writing centers have been appearing across Japan. Understanding how a US-born idea of the university writing center matures in the changing Japanese societal context will allow writing researchers to bring a transnational perspective to the broad, Writing Studies. Using a sociocultural perspective, this ethnographic study aims to make visible the everyday,

literacy practices of Japanese university writers, and in turn, how the idea of writing center can be realized differently depends on location and people they serve. Finally, this research attempts to make contributions to the bodies of research related to teaching of writing and issues related to multilingual writers.

This study is presented in eight chapters. Chapter 1 presents an overview of intersecting bodies of research concerning writing centers. Additionally, it introduces activity theory as an analytical framework for writing center research. Chapter 2 is a methodological chapter. This study uses educational ethnography as methods of inquiry and grounded theory as a guiding principle for decision making on the processes of data collection. Chapter 3 is based on an interview sub-study which involved 6 writing educators in different parts of Japan. Its aim is to describe the current writing education in Japanese universities in order to understand the larger context of this current study. Chapter 4 zooms into the individual narratives that includes writing center experiences and expectations from the tutor- and tutee-perspectives. Once the idea of writing center is discussed both from an institutional and personal perspectives, Chapter 5, then, exhibits how the tutor's cultural background may guide their conferencing practices by looking into the video observation data. Chapter 6 examines the roles of the writing center in the Japanese higher education by comparing and contrasting the findings from John Calvin University and Western University. Chapter 7 considers the idea of writing center from an activity perspective in order to further the discussion of writing education in the Japanese higher educational context. Finally, chapter 8 is a concluding chapter which attempts to bring together the historical and cultural backgrounds, as well as the findings from the current ethnographic research to understand the works of the writing center. It offers a concept of *literate*

histories as a framework to understand how student writers (and tutors) come to inhabit the writing center and what the writing center may mean to them. Ultimately, the concept of *literate histories* aims to expand the definitions of the writing center through highlighting the experiences of student writers (and tutors) who use the writing center for their own various purposes.

II. Chapter I

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter provides a theoretical overview of this study, which uses a socio-cultural framework for understanding the role of university writing centers in Japan. A socio-cultural framework, notably the North American genre school, contends that people use writing not merely as a means to transmit knowledge, but to communicate with each other in specific rhetorical contexts. Further, each rhetorical context has its own historicity and these contexts interact with each other in specific settings (Bazerman, 1994). For the purpose of this study I use the term, writing to refer to broader literacy activities which involve the writing of text in and outside of schooling. This study understands writing or literacy activities as part of a "cultural evolution" (Bazerman, 2013) which get manifested in different modes and has specific use in a particular context. Further, the idea of writing centers disrupts an individualistic notion of writing, and allows us to view writing as a social activity. This qualitative interview and video observation research employs a socio-cultural perspective to examine how university writing centers act as sponsors of writing to Japanese university student writers.

The following section will provide contextualization of this research study by discussing writing center research. It will then describe how the writing center field and scholarship have evolved and shifted its research focus through a review of literature on conferencing. Finally, as the writing center movement continues to spread globally, this research attempts to understand writing center work from an activity theory perspective. Writing researchers have used activity theory perspectives to understand writing in different contexts. An activity theory analysis of Japanese university writing centers will offer

insights into understanding how student writers develop writing abilities in different social, political, and institutional contexts. The dissertation research aims to make a contribution to this body of research by focusing on a Japanese context where the idea of "literacy" has a different set of meanings.

Writing Center Research

A brief history of writing centers reveal that, the idea of a writing center is caught in "the tension between the writing center whose identity rests on *method* and the writing center whose identity rests on *site*" (Boquet, 1999, p. 465, *emphasis* in italics added). The idea of a writing center originates from the idea of a *writing laboratory*. The laboratory method of teaching was first embraced in writing classes in the 1920s when composition teachers reacted to the teacher-centered pedagogy which prevailed the English classrooms. The idea of a writing lab quickly became popular with a cautionary tale. As stand-alone writing centers began to emerge, the idea of a laboratory teaching became a *site* (Boquet, 1999) where underachieving students were sent to practice through drilling exercises. These "holding tanks filled with drill pads" (Leaner, 2009, p. 27) enforced the remedial theme, which was becoming prevalent as the student population began to increase in the 1930s. By this time, writing centers had become "the site[s] of regulation" whose purpose was "controlling literacy" (Boquet, 1999, p. 466). Such terms as *Hospital English* and *English Clinics* came from this period when writing centers were considered as *sites* for "removing students' deficiencies" (Lerner, 2009, p. 20). Then, a psychotherapeutic approach of the 1940s allowed students to draw on their experiences and expertise. This method relied on asking questions, and the idea of writing laboratory became once again a *method* of instruction (Boquet, 1999). In the 1950s, however, writing centers "disappeared" (Boquet,

1999, p. 471) when the backlash against remedial students intensified and remained "underground" (Lerner, 2009, p. 32). Another turning point came in the 1980s when the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) movement began to gain momentum. Since then, writing centers have strived to assert their positions within individual institutions.

Stigmatization and Legitimatization

Writing center scholarship has long engaged in an effort to remove stigma (which came with the remedial history of the writing center work) and to legitimatize its work. From an institutional view, writing centers have been "generally looked upon as a service function, geared toward remediation" (Pemberton, 2003, p. 21). To writing center scholars' dismay, writing centers (which have historically speaking been a subdivision of the English department) carry an image of "writing-program housewives" (Carino, 2001, p. 4) whose purpose is a "second-class, 'service function' in educational institutions" (Pemberton, 2003, p. 30). Further, the central administration continue to view writing centers as instruments for serving the university mission for retention efforts (Carino, 2001).

As for the profession, writing center directors have traditionally been viewed as administrators, not as teachers, scholars, or writing specialists (Olson & Ashton-Jones, 1988). A writing center director's life is known to be chaotic as they are generally "too busy working [them]selves to death – running centers on inadequate or even nonexistent budgets, functioning as director secretary, tutor, and public relations expert all at one" (Ede, 1989, p. 5). Unfortunately, many writing center directors, whose dedicated work helps student get their voice heard, experiences a varying degrees of constraints in their institution because of their non-academic (by classification) status.

The National Writing Centers Association (NWCA) published the Position Statement on Professional Concerns of Writing Center Directors in 1985, and an NCTE-sanctioned association recognized writing center direction as a legitimate field in 1987. Since then, many writing center director positions have been filled by composition specialists who hold a Ph.D. in composition and rhetoric and other related fields, and the writing center scholarship became active with a professional journal and regularly published newsletters. Furthermore, North (1984) explains that:

> writing centers have begun to expand their institutional roles… some centers have established resource libraries for writing teachers…. sponsor readings or reading series by poets and fiction writers,… serve as clearinghouse for information on where to publish, on writing programs, competitions,… [and some] writing centers [began]… offering academic credit. (p. 445)

Yet these moves can be viewed as reactions to how writing centers were perceived; "as though what writing centers do that really matters – talking to writers – were not enough" (North, 1984). Writing centers must constantly be evolving to legitimatize its work within institutions.

Although writing centers may be in constant struggle to assert their positions in their institutions, writing center scholars are committed to explore and enhance the idea of writing laboratory as a *method*. Koster (2003) writes that "the idea of a writing laboratory is an idea of teaching and learning as a continuous experiment towards what really works, towards the gest of past practices and the search for new practices not yet imagined" (p. 12). Similarly, Lerner (2009) writes:

> The idea of a writing laboratory is an old idea…., yet an idea somehow always ahead of its time,....Whatever the strategy, teaching writing as an experiment in what is possible, as a way of offering meaning-making opportunities for students no matter the subject matter, is an endeavor worth the struggle. It embodies the ideal of higher education, while at the same time it offers a pedagogical plan for meeting those ideas. It is an ongoing experiment in teaching and learning that beckons us all to don those white coats and safety glasses and discover what works (p. 197).

Those who work in the writing centers are pioneers and devoted facilitators of student writing. Who, then, continue to make contributions to writing center work? Who "don those white coats" (Lerner, 2009, p. 197) and what are their challenges?

Geller and Denny (2013) conducted an interview study which involved fourteen participants from diverse institutional backgrounds with an equal representation of "administrative/faculty split". The researchers used the term "Writing Center Professionals" (WCPs) to include "all individuals working in a professional capacity directing and acting as leadership in writing centers" (p. 98). WCPs are often both administrators and faculty, and their position do not have "a clear-cut standing" (p. 99). These important nuances signal realities that are bittersweet for the profession: while the range of employment possibilities is wide open, the production pressures (and outlets) for intellectual labor are just as variable, and opportunities for on-campus success are prevalent, how one might gain disciplinary identity and status through work in writing centers remains a question almost no one seems to be able to answer. No matter how chaotic their professional lives were in and out of their writing centers (one participant served on multiple committees at her institution, which helped promote an understanding of writing center work to the faculty outside of the writing

center), the authors found that WCPs truly enjoyed and took pride in the writing center work in which they were involved. The authors concluded that while the service aspect of writing center work might continue to pose "threat" in professionalization and legitimatization of writing center work, a sense of community or an attitude that "willingly make the best of the conditions [they] inherit" (p. 124) was what drove writing center work.

Locations

One way to understand how a writing center is viewed within an institution is to consider where the center is located. Haviland, Fye, and Colby (2001) explain that:

> Location is political because it is an organizational choice that creates visibility or invisibility, access to resources, and associations that define the meanings, uses, and users of designated spaces.…[L]ocations…, shape the roles others perceive writing, writers, and writing centers to play as well as the images writing and writing centers have of themselves .(pp. 85 - 86)

Writing centers can take multiple forms and be situated in many places. Yet, each location holds its own history and reflects its own philosophy. A writing center can: be a freestanding center, which enjoys the most autonomy; be located within or attached to an academic department or a center and operate under the auspices of their hosting department; be located in a student-services center, in which case it would serve the "whole student" not just his or her writing; operate in multiple locations and separated by disciplines rather than a single location, however, this approach ignores the composition theory of interdisciplinary collaboration; and finally, be online, as some compositionists argue that egalitarian nature of e-spaces allows participants to express their ideas freely without the face-to-face interaction (Haviland, Fye, and Colby, 2001).

Regardless of the location, the writing center is caught in a tension between enhancing intellectual credentials within an educational institution and asserting its own contribution to the institution. Koster (2003) reminds the reader, however, that "[writing centers] are, for better or worse, part of the institutions that house [the writing center]…[and that w]e must learn to represent ourselves as effective parts of those institutions if we accept the challenge of administrating centers" (p. 164). Thus, when writing centers are able to articulate their mission and identities, they may be able to transform the institutions themselves.

Names

The writing center has been called many names. The first writing *laboratory* emerged in the 1930s and by the 1950s, writing *laboratories* and *clinics* had spread widely across the US. While the term *clinic* may suggest a location that provides help to repair damage, "the term *laboratory* suggests a location where students could experiment "under the guidance of an instructor" however, as Moore (1950) explains, these terms were used interchangeably in practice (p.389). Furthermore, writing clinics/labs were populated by student writers who were sent there on a basis of a diagnosis or a recommendation by a dean. For example, those students' writing proficiency was "deemed inadequate to meet the standards for graduation, [or classified as] poorly prepared freshmen" (Moore, 1950, p. 388). Thus, writing center pedagogy has a history of teaching with in a confinement of a certain text and test preparation (Kelly, 1980). When a student did not pass (or was in a danger of not passing) the department exit exam, s/he was sent to the Lab for a certain number of hours per week to practice mechanical skills. Because of this past, being sent to writing labs, clinics, or centers (whatever they are called) are perceived by writers as a penalty rather than

a voluntary activity, and many writers are "embarrassed and ashamed, baffled and confused, scared and worried" about going to the lab (Kelly, 1980, p. 15). However, when they come to the writing center, student writers quickly discover that writing center tutors are not there to mark their papers with red pencils, but instead to have a conversation about their writing, feeling towards writing, and about life in general. When writers engage in composing activities under such a nonevaluative condition, they experience "the exhilarating feeling that comes with *fluency*" (Kelly, 1980, p. 15).

A student writer is likely to come back to the writing center once s/he has a positive experience in a tutoring session. In fact, Carino (1992) feels that a writing center visit should be an essential part of a writing process, as he writes:

> Not to require all students in all writing courses to work in the lab was to deny that the kind of instruction it offered is integral to leaning to write. To require the lab of only basic writers was to infuse the metaphor with connotations of punishment meted out to those who dared to be ungrammatical. (p. 36)

Whatever is in their name, a writing lab/center should be a place where:

> [P]eople - students and teachers- can lead to think writing, not as a drudging academic requirement but a fulfilling dynamic process of sharing their experiences with others; where they see their own writing, not as a product to be criticized and graded, but as a means of exploring and understanding their perceptions of the world; where they can hear their writing as the voice of the unique human being each of them is and is becoming. (Kelly, 1980, p. 17)

Institutions continue to use various names to describe the kind of facilities that offer one-on-one writing instruction, such as Basic Skills Center or Writing Skills Center. In contrast to these *centers* used in compounds, Carino (1992) suggests that:

> [Y]oked simply with *writing center* forms a bold and audacious metaphor aspiring to powerful definitions as in 'the center of a circle, of revolution, of centripetal attraction; and connected used' (OED, 1035). In this broad sense, for the writers of the 1920s, Paris was a writing center. (p. 38)

Using the term "writing center" as a generic description is problematic because writing centers from one institution to another tend to differ greatly in terms of history and the needs they serve (Harris, 1990). Nevertheless, discussing the writing center in a general term gives a ground to examine its history and difficulties associated with it. Carino (1992) writes, "only from the inside can we define our own metaphors to make what others talk about when they talk about writing centers" (p. 40). Examining "what" is in the name may be a first step to begin to understand writing center work at a particular context.

Pedagogy

The writing center movement spread rapidly in the U.S. beginning in the 1980s to the point that those writing programs without writing centers were considered "incomplete" or "lacking" (Harris, 1990. P. 16). However, to those outside of writing center communities, what writing centers do is unclear. Harris (1990) explains the contradiction between writing centers and traditional model of teaching as follows:

> …after all, most educators think of education in group terms, students sit in classes, move in groups, pass through educational systems in large numbers… Classroom teachers of writing can talk about 'the writing process' as if it applies universally to

> all writers, about textbooks that work for whole levels of students. Yet, what writing centers are about is the antitheses of generic, mass instruction. We are committed to individualized instruction, to taking the student out of the group and to looking at her as an individual, as a person with all her uniqueness. (p.19)

Rather than providing services to produce good writing, writing centers strive to produce good writers. North (1984) explains that "writing centers define their province in terms of a given curriculum, taking over those portions of it that "regular" teachers are willing to cede or, presumably, unable to handle" (p. 438). This is unfortunate because such division is preventing opportunities for all facilities of teaching of writing to collaborate. By working hand-in-hand with classroom teachers, writing centers can provide students opportunities to practice being an effective communicator through the individualized conversations they can have with writing center tutors.

The writing center teaches student writers to become engaged writers, listeners, talkers, and thinkers through the process of having a conversation with others, and eventually, to be able to hear their own voices. The writing center pedagogy teaches students to be in tune with their inner voices by focusing on the process of writing. Whether the place is called the lab, clinic, or center, the development of facilities providing one-to-one writing instruction concurred the paradigm shift from an emphasis on product to the focus on writing as a process. However, too much focus on the "process" of writing can be dangerous. Summerfield (1988) laments that by the late 1980s "the process of *process* has become reified" (p. 6). Students were taught to complete writing in stages, such as pre-writes, draft, and then revise, and had to write a certain number of drafts. In other words, process had become institutionalized (Summerfield, 1988). Thus, the writing center

pedagogy lies on a fine line between the *process* of writing in an institutionalized sense and finding an individual writer's *own* process of writing.

Although a socio-cultural theory of writing informs us that writing is a social process and writers compose texts in conversations with themselves and others, writing in general is considered a solitary activity. Writing center tutors enter this "ordinarily solo ritual of writing" (p. 439) by taking a role of a participant-observer who observes and makes sense of "a" writing process of a given writer (North, 1984). In this view, "the" writing process is meaningless because every writer writes differently. As a participant-observer, writing center tutor "see what happens" during this ritual by observing and asking questions that the writer him/herself does not think to ask themselves. In this relationship, the writer is a willing collaborator and beneficiary of the entire process. Together, the writer and the tutor make sense of the writer's composing process and how s/he develops as a writer. Writing center pedagogy rests on the idea of collaboration and continues to create a dialogue about writing that is central to higher education.

The idea of collaboration became a driving force behind writing center work. For a long time and based on the idea that the writing center should be a safe place where student writers can talk freely about their writing without being judged, writing center scholarship condemned tutors who used direct, instructional, conversation strategies and recommended that writing centers would provide inviting and supportive environment where student writers can be in charge of their learning. In recent years, however, writing center researchers became more critical of the roles of writing centers within institutions and began to divorce from a "long-outdated Directive/Non-Directive (D/ND) lore paradigm" (Kjesrud.

2015, p. 33), and writing center research has slowly shifted its focus from personal and individual stories to evidence-based, empirical research.

Driscoll and Perdue (2012) examined articles that were published in *The Writing Center Journal* since its establishment in 1980 to 2009 and found that there was a general lack of replicable, aggregable, and date-supported (RAD) research in writing center scholarship. The authors suspected that because writing center administrator positions continued to be filled by scholars who do not have particular training in fields related to teaching of writing, and who are also burdened by the heavy workload, writing center research as a field had "internalized" an anecdotal approach which used individuals' experience to support its claims. Nevertheless, the authors found that a slow but gradual increase in the amount of RAD research published in WCJ over time since the 1980s. In order to increase "research supported best practices," the authors challenges writing center researchers to redefine *research* and "its relationship to our practices and publications" (p. 35). Finally, because writing center practitioners are in the "position of having to justify their programs and budgets to educational administrators and faculty across the disciplines who expect research-supported evidence," the authors believe that the revised idea of research and its practice will provide writing center administrators with common ground and language to speak "both within and outside of our field to retrace our steps and to test our claims" (p. 35).

Driscoll and Perdue (2014) followed up their 2012 study with an investigation which involved online surveys (133 participants) followed by interviews (15 participants), in which they contacted writing center directors, writing center associates/assistant directors, and graduate administrators across the U.S. (and one participant from Europe) about their beliefs

about writing center research and research practices. The researchers found that most writing center administrators had a training background in rhetoric and composition programs (44%), followed by English literature programs (24 %), and that participants defined research differently depending on their educational background, position within their writing center, and the center's institutional placement within the university. According to the study, 73 % (11 participants) of the administrators who participated in the interviews felt that both qualitative and quantitative data was needed to understand what is described in the study as "real work," as well as a range of work, of writing centers. The researchers found that many writing center administrators used research mainly for an assessment purpose to report to an external, stakeholder-audience. Although a majority of the interview participants emphasized the "uniqueness" (p. 121) of their writing center, context, and the students they served, the researchers found there was "a great deal of similarity exist[ed] in the practices and procedures of the centers [their] participants administer[ed]" (p. 121). The authors believe that writing center researchers can use data collected and analyzed by replication and aggregation techniques can be useful to "extrapolate local findings to other settings and to develop multi-institutional projects" (p. 126).

Writing center researcher in the last fifteen years have been shifting their research framework to RAD research. The following section covers a review of literature which focuses on effective tutoring strategies, specifically the use of directives (rather than non-judgmental, non-directive conversational strategies).

A Review of Research on Conferencing

Thompson et al. (2009) examined "codified writing center lore" (p. 79) which guided writing center practices since the 1980s. Writing center lore directs that writing conferences

should be controlled by students (not tutors) and maintains that tutors and students are equal. However, more recent research findings suggest the tutor's roles in their collaboration with students are more complicated than the once "cherished" (Capossela, 2001, as cited in Thompson et al., 2009, p. 79) lore. In order to "bring together lore about tutors' roles as collaborators in writing center conferences and assesses the influence of these mandates on tutors' and students' satisfaction" (p. 79), Thomson et al. (2009) analyzed over 4000 post-conference-student and -tutor surveys which were collected over an academic year. The researchers found that, on contrary to the mandates, students felt more satisfied when tutors were able to guide them throughout a conference session, giving them directions and positive feedback. Based on these findings, the researchers suggest "asymmetrical" (p. 99) collaboration, which assumes "expert-novice" roles. In asymmetrical collaboration, tutors are more knowledgeable in the subject matter and/or writing skills; however, the student "has the power to initiate the collaboration and set the agenda". A skillful writing tutor, then, answers students' questions and gives a directive without being "hierarchical," which allows students to maintain control and "to be responsible for their own learning" (p. 100).

Writing tutors need to acquire certain sets of skills in order to guide the students though their process of writing. Writing center researchers use scaffolding, a popular, more current framework, to describe tutor-tutee interactions in writing centers. Thompson (2009) adapts Wood, Bruner, and Ross's definition of scaffolding:

> More often than not, it [the tutor's help for the student] involves a kind of "scaffolding" process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal, which would be beyond his unassisted efforts. The scaffolding consist essentially of the adult "controlling" those elements of the task that are

> initially beyond the learner's capacity, thus permitting him to concentrate upon and complete only those elements that are within his range of competence. The task thus proceeds to a successful conclusion. We assume, however, that the process can potentially achieve much more for the learner than an assisted completion of the task. It may result, eventually, in development of task competence by the learner at a pace that would far outstrip his unassisted efforts. (Wood, Bruner, and Ross, 1976, p. 90, as cited in Thompson, 2009, p. 420)

Scaffolding, ultimately, teaches students self-regulation and to become an independent learner. Although the original authors did not make direct connection with Vygotskian psychology, scaffolding was soon associated with Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development" (1980), which defines the range of performance a student can achieve when assisted by an expert (Thompson, 2009).

Nevertheless, tutors and tutees may have different ideas about a successful conference. Thonus (2002), in her hybrid study of tutorial talk and ethnographic research, examined twelve conference sessions with six native English speaking (NS) tutees and six non-native English speaking (NNS) tutees. She conducted two, post conference interviews with each participant to find out what factors led both tutors and tutees to believe their conferences were successful. Her findings revealed that in a successful conference, tutees felt their tutors understood the demands and expectations of the academy because they too were (graduate) students. Both tutors and tutees felt that tutoring sessions were most effective when tutors did not see themselves as an instructor "surrogate" (p. 126). Establishing rapport was also key. Both tutors and tutees felt that their sessions went more smoothly when they agreed on the focus of a conversation (e.g., what needed to be done)

early in the session and the conference resembled a real conversation (rather than an "ask-and-advise service encounter"). Finally, tutors used more directives with NNS tutees in successful conference sessions. In other words, tutors mitigated directives more frequently with NS students, which illustrated that tutors operated with different degrees of politeness when working with student writers of different language backgrounds.

Addressing a cross-cultural difference in politeness is a challenge, and whether or not to provide corrective feedback to NNS writers became a popular topic for debate in the 1990s. The popular belief was that direct grammar correction in L2 classroom was "both ineffective and harmful and should therefore be abandoned" (Truscott, 1996, as cited in Bitchener, Young, and Cameron, 2005, p. 192). However, findings from Bitcherner, Young, and Cameron's (2005) study, in which they examined the effect of different types of corrective feedback on NNS writers, support an effective use of direct feedback. Specifically, NNS writers benefited from direct oral feedback in combination with direct written feedback.

Training is inevitable in order for tutors to sharpen tutoring strategies and to cultivate cultural sensitivity. Graesser, Person, and Magliano (1995) write that "[s]killed tutors are exception, rather than the rule" (p. 496). These researchers studied tutors whom they classified as "normal" tutors (i.e., non-expert tutors) and found that normal tutors did not use tutoring strategies, such as Socratic questioning, in which the inquirer asks questions to help the respondent's own misconceptions. Rather than letting students control their conversation, normal tutors "anchored" their basis of conferencing in specific examples and problems and made curriculum-based suggestions (e.g., checking assignment requirement), and the students did not feel their efforts were acknowledged. However, normal tutors

worked jointly with the students in trying to get their meanings across on the paper. The authors found that because the conversation with normal tutors were more naturalistic, students were able to reach deeper reasoning than classroom settings. These findings suggest that training and experience are needed for tutors to implement strategies and to "consider affective and motivational goals of the learning experience" (p. 516).

Nevertheless, attending to the affective component during a limited timeframe of a tutoring session is a challenge. Using scaffolding and politeness as theoretical bases, Mackiewicz and Thompson (2013) illustrated how tutors can attempt to motivate students through an analysis of two writing center conferences. Based on the results, the authors suggested that tutors could motivate students by generating rapport and solidarity with them.

At the same time, Mackiewicz and Thompson (2013) remind the reader about the challenges concerning cross-cultural differences in use of politeness strategies and uptake of these strategies. A tutor's comment which may be considered "polite" in one culture may very well offend students from another culture. On the other hand, students from another culture might recognize a tutor's comment in one way (an insult or a praise, for example) when in fact the intended meaning is the complete opposite.

Whether or not a tutor is working with a NS (or NNS) writer, s/he can use both verbal and non-verbal strategies to facilitate learning in a conference. Thompson (2009) studied how an experienced tutor used verbal scaffolding and hand gestures to build rapport and offer instruction to a student whom he was not acquainted during a conference. In her microanalysis, the researcher identified three strategies, which are; Direct instruction, Cognitive scaffolding, and Motivational scaffolding. Using these strategies, the experienced

tutor made the student feel comfortable, allowing her to increase active participation and to control the conference session.

One of the most recent study on conferencing is done by Mackiewicz and Thompson (2015). In their study, the researchers video recorded 51 writing conferences over a total of four years. Then, they selected 10 satisfactory conferences based on both the tutee and tutor's rating to be analyzed. In addition, Thompson collected post-conference interviews which occurred with little or no delay with most of the tutors. Then, they developed a 16-code scheme to identify and to analyze tutoring strategies, which were further categorized into three areas: instruction, cognitive scaffolding, and motivational scaffolding. This study is important because it offers a coding scheme for analyzing tutor talks, which in turn can facilitate tutor training.

Writing center researchers, over the last fifteen years, have focused on more strategic ways of helping student writers; however, student writers are not the sole beneficiaries of writing center work. During a keynote speech for the 25th Annual National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, Kenneth A. Bruffee illuminated that in addition to obvious advantages in preparation for the professional world (employers required their recruits to communicates with each other and to produce memos, for example), being a peer tutor was educational and beneficial in many ways. (Most writing center tutor positions are occupied by undergraduate or graduate student tutors.) Bruffee explained that, "Peer tutoring is a kind of craft". When a tutor starts out, he or she learns from more seasoned tutor who oversees him or her as the new tutor gains experiences. The tutor then learns the craft him or herself by practicing, eventually handing on "the skill of the craft to others". The peer tutor influences how the tutee feels about their assignments and about themselves. Peer tutors are

influenced by this process of helping others because such process “broadens [peer tutors’] understanding of [their] own and [their] fellow students’ value and the importance of both of [them] as human beings”.

Writing is a form of civil exchange that thoughtful people engage in when they try to live reasonable lives with one another. Writing is a way of caring about people, and sometimes it is a way of caring for people, too. We may write to and about people who are nearby or people far away, or even people who are no longer living. Finally, He explained that, “[W]riting is a personally engaging social activity”. As peer tutors engage in the craft, they are bringing people together to accomplish something. They are crafting “human interdependence”.

Writing Research from Activity Perspectives

This research employs a socio-cultural approach to understand the functions of writing centers in Japanese universities. Among the broader socio-cultural approaches, Activity theory provides a useful framework for understanding this “human interdependence,” and how humans use tools as mediational means, and through interactions with each other, to achieve goals. In the case of a writing center, writing tutors and students use writing and other mediational means to communicate with each other and to construct messages jointly in relations to their positions in a particular institutional setting. Using Activity theory a unit of analysis, this research attempts to understand writing conferencing as a social activity in which student writers (and tutors) engage.

Activity Theory

Activity theory (AT) posits activity as a unit of analysis. It draws on the Soviet cultural-historical school, notably by the works of Vygotsky, Leont’ev, and Luria, which

traced cognition and behavior. The broad tradition of activity theory has many strands and influences research in the fields including education, language socialization, and computer interface design. Minimum elements of AT, which serves as a paradigm of writing research, include the object, subject, mediating artifacts (signs and tools), rules, community, and division of labor, and AT considers the concept of "*object-oriented, collective,* and *culturally mediated human activity,* or *activity system"* (Engeström, 1999, p. 9). The subject is the agent who uses mediating artifacts (tools) to achieve the object. AT locates humans (i.e., the subject) in systems of activities which "can stretch out in space and time and multiple through social division of labor to become large, powerful, and immensely varied" through the use of tools (Russell, 1997, p. 511). Because of this changing nature, AT is also called a cultural-historical theory.

AT contend that humans control their behaviors from "outside" using artifacts, as artifacts are "integral and inseparable components of human functioning" (Engeström, 1999, p. 29). Further, Russell (1997) suggest that by analyzing a system or a network, writing researchers can trace the interaction among people and the inscriptions called texts and "other material tools without separating either from collective, ongoing motivated action over time". AT aims to make sense of the networks – activity system – of human interactions by looking at how people use their tools as they engage in particular activities. AT's main concern is the "historical development of activity and the mediating role of artifacts" (Nardi, 1996, p. 41). AT is concerned not only with how the mediating power of a tool transforms a person, but also how the tools connect with other people. Further, an AT analysis illuminates goal-related processes to fulfill an object, and although objects can transform in the course of an activity, it does not "change on a moment-by-moment basis"

(Nardi, 1996, p. 37). What AT highlights in fact is the subject's consciousness and intentions by privileging them (Nardi, 1997). An AT analysis makes visible the multi-voiced historicity and carries a predictive potential for understanding an activity system in question. AT tells us that human activity is multifaceted and constantly changing, thus, activity systems must be understood against their own history. Specially, activity systems "take shape and get transformed over lengthy periods of time" (Engeström, 2000, 136), and history provides clues to understanding their problems and potentials. In writing research, AT allows investigators to look beyond discourse and dyadic relationship between the teacher and students in the classroom by "locating and analyzing a particular action or group of actions in both their synchronic and diachronic relations to other collective actions in systems or networks" (Russell, 1997). An AT approach allows writing researchers to move away from a structuralist and formalist assumption that writing is a skill that is learned "once and for all" (Russell, 1997b) and focus on the social and psychological dimensions of writing as an object.

North American Genre Approach to Writing Research

One of many strands of AT is the North American Genre School. Bazerman (1994) pioneered the tradition of a cultural-historical approach to writing research. He began by looking into the undergraduate research paper to examine how different types of writing defined various disciplines and formed disciplinary work. Bazerman's (1982) sociology of science provided a framework for studying the ways scientists write. "But his most consistent method was and is," Russell (1997b) explains, "historical study." Notably, his theory of genre systems (1994) was born from his study (1988) of the 17th through 20th-century Royal Society writing.

Russell (1997) connects AT with the North American concept of genre, which he views as "*operationalized* social action". Rather than seeing genre as static categories of discourse, the North American genre school views genre as a typified tool-mediated action which get operationalized over time, and AT can be used to understand different genres in purposes in activities. Through the use of some tool in response to some need for action with others, individuals appropriate (or learns) the conditions and expectations of a collective. Moreover, as individuals learns a new (to them) genre, some may appropriate the identity and object of the collective. Nevertheless, individuals participate in and are members of multiple systems, and a generic labeling of a genre may not fully encompass the relationships that an individual has with particular activity systems. Russell (1997) argues that "the process of appropriation is not always unidirectional (simple socialization or adaptation) but dialectical". An AT analysis allows writing researchers to understand how students behave (social psychology) – i.e., learns to write - in a collective (society or culture) – i.e., school – by examining the motives (the object) of multiple activity system which they interact.

Individuals do not, however, achieve activities on their own. Paré (2000) connects a notion of genre sets to AT, specifically how writers acquire knowledge of genre sets through collaboration with other members of the community. An AT analysis allows researchers to illustrate how individuals accomplish activities through interactions with others. The North American tradition of research on scientific writing has helped us understand how members of discursive communities learn conventions and expectations of a written discourse through interacting with texts and with other members of the community. An AT analysis of writing

center activities, then, will make visible the processes of how matriculated student writers learn academic writing as a genre.

Russell and Yañez (2003) remind us that AT is "not really a single theory as much as an orientation to learning" (p. 335), and AT analyzes human activity over time, especially *learning* as a kind of *change*. Using AT as a "heuristic," North American genre theorists "view writing and learning in very different terms than transmission models of writing and learning" (Russell and Yañez, 2003, p. 332). AT uses "shared tool models" and views:

> [C]ommunication and learning as social in origin, and human activity as collective. In these models, we humans (subjects) act together with others humans and material tools to change something in our world, the object of our activity. The tools that we use, including writing, mediate our thinking and doing. One such tool, writing (and the action of writing) actively mediates—shapes—both our thinking and our action together, our activity. (Russell and Yañez, 2003, p. 335)

Individuals *learn* written genres through social interactions and becoming accustomed to using typified rhetorical actions over time (Bazerman, 1994). Using a genre-based approach and AT as an analytical framework, North American composition scholars have studied how people use writing as a mediational means to transform, and in turn, transforming the way they write in various settings.

As the following review of literature will show, student writers write for different contexts. For example, there is a strong emphasis on career readiness in current higher education, thus, students are reminded of the need to write in professional settings. While individual student writers write for different purposes and in various contexts, the writing center may be a site such multifaceted act of writing may intersect with each other. The

writing center, from an AT perspective, is a site of a specialized activity system in support of other activity systems. Through an AT analysis of a writing center, this research aims to make visible how writing centers can serve as a site for a learning activity system for the student writers.

Russell (1997b) traced research on writing in workplaces and in academic settings in the last 30 years in his article, *Writing and Genre in Higher Education and Workplaces: A Review of Studies That Use Cultural--Historical Activity Theory*. The following section attempts to add to his list by focusing on the studies which were published after the 2000s. Using Russell's (1997b) review of literature as a model, the next section will cover "nonacademic" or workplace writing. Then, the studies that focus on transitions from school to work will be discussed, proceeding to studies of writing in undergraduate education.

Writing in Workplaces

Beaufort (2000) followed two newcomers to a nonprofit organization as they transformed from novice to expert writers. Their job required them to do considerable amount of writing (e.g., grant writing). In her ethnographic and interview study, Beaufort found that as participants became more capable writers through interactions with more experienced writers, they assumed various writing roles from the 15 writing roles which were identified (observer; reader/researcher; clerical assistant; document designer; proofreader; grammarian; editor; ghostwriter; coauthor (low-status texts); author (low-status texts); coauthor (high-status texts); author (high status texts); inventor; coach; negotiator). Her study illustrates how an organization employs an apprenticeship model to achieve organization's goals (e.g., to get grants). Beaufort offers an alternative way of teaching

writing through socializing a writer into a discourse community and by emphasizing collaborative, rather than competitive, models.

Genre based approaches are generally used to study activities that are less contingent. However, Spinuzzi (2010) applied a writing, activity, and genre research (WAGR) approach to study how search engine optimization (SEO) specialists produce 10 to 12 complex 20-page reports within the first ten business days of each month. He found that writing monthly reports was only a small part of writing. SEO specialists undergo a set of standing transformations as they worked in an environment which demanded flexibility and constant boundary-crossing where genres and practices got templated. Further, the SEO specialists practiced constant ethos-building in order to gain trust from their client in a collaborative environment. In this setting, resources are shared, which allowed the specialists to produce reports in a short period of time.

Bremner (2012) examined how a Chinese intern socialized into a Hong Kong PR company over a 3-month period of internship in a case study, which combined rhetorical genre studies (RGS), AT, and situated learning. Bremner (2012) explains:

> [N]ot only is writing an integral part of the professional contexts in which it is found, it also provides a route for learners to become members of communities of practice: It is simultaneously a means to and an object of learning and in this way plays a powerful role in the process of socialization. (p. 8)

He found that the participant's written discourse changed considerably over the period of internship. While this illustrates workplace as a context for learning, Bremner also found that the academy provided tools to the participant which she used to understand organizational culture.

Writing in Graduate Schools

Graduate-level writing, specifically dissertation writing, is "[o]n one hand, ... is the ultimate student paper, the final school-based display of knowledge and ability. On the other hand, it is often—in whole or in part—the first significant contribution to a disciplinary conversation" (Paré, Sharke-Meyerring, and McAlpine, 2007, p. 179). In other words, a context for graduate writing can be viewed as a site where transformation occurs. Dissertation writing, however, is not as simple as writing which features "a double genre". Paré, Sharke-Meyerring, and McAlpine (2007) illustrate the dissertation as a complex, "multi-genre, responding to multiple exigencies, functioning in multiple rhetorical situations, addressing multiple readers" (p. 180). Using AT as a unit of analysis, the researchers demonstrate how the dissertation gets constructed and answers to the exigencies of the department, faculty, university, discipline, and society, which themselves influence one another.

Dysthe (2002) examined how supervising professors and master's degree students in three disciplines understood and described their experiences of supervising practices in a Norwegian university. She found that each discipline possesses different text cultures and text norms, and these differences are unarticulated. Through an interview study, she identified three supervision models (teaching, partnership, and apprenticeship) and found that different supervision models in a discipline "arise from disciplinary, institutional, and personal factors" (p. 531). Nevertheless, she writes that, "The three models of supervision, although they provide useful distinctions, are not disjoint categories". In fact, she found that most supervision processes included all aspects of three categories. Through an activity theory analysis, Dysthe identified the supervisor's task to "make his own voice clear and to

listen to and revoice the voice of the student; it is simultaneously to keep his own authority and identity and give authority and identity to the student" (p. 535).

Ding (2008), in her report of a yearlong study of the initiation of novice grant writers to the activity system of National Institute of Health grant applications, combines a genre based approach with an activity theory analysis to illustrate no genres exist in isolation. In fact, intersecting genres form systems of genre. Ding writes:

> As no written product exists in isolation, to put the target genre in its actual activity system and to explicitly teach other components, rules, and expectations of that activity system can help novice writers to acquire discourse community knowledge, process knowledge, and rhetorical knowledge in addition to genre knowledge (p. 43).

Ultimately, she shows how writing teachers can incorporate cognitive apprenticeship and social apprenticeship in order to enhance learning through meaningful interactions and socialization with peers, colleagues, and experts.

Writing in Undergraduate Education

The US practice of general education can place students in a confusion situation which they may find alienating. Despite its aims of "giv[ing] students a broader view of knowledge and … teach[ing] ... generalizable information or skills useful in their chosen fields or, more broadly still, in their personal or civic lives," Russell and Yañez (2003) argue that these courses produce a "fundamental contradictions" (p. 332) in teaching of writing. In these courses, teachers in specific fields continue to use and expect students to use specialist discourse, while students are merely taking those courses to satisfy their general education requirements. Using Y. Engeström's version of cultural historical activity theory combined with North American genre theory, Russell and Yañez (2003) contend that this alienation

may be overcome if their instructors can teach students to recognize and analyze new systems of activity and genre.

Nevertheless, Wiemelt (2001) argues no matter how hard writing instructors work, they cannot "expect students to share [the same learning] goals," as individual students "form goals, plan, evaluate what it is they are doing when they write". He studied how three undergraduate student writers negotiated classroom writing practices over a 5-week period during which the students drafted and revised two papers. Wiemelt reported that written discourse activities that students engage with are "highly complex and contingent accomplishments that unfold across an evolving range of simultaneous, interpenetrating, and sometimes even conflicting writing and school contexts". Based on these *changes,* writing instructors and student writers make decisions to "organize their talk and writing". In order to make school writing meaningful, Wiemelt suggested that rather than treating classroom activities, such as peer reviewing and teacher-student conferencing, as "some means to an end," student writers can engage in these activities "as an end in themselves".

Student Alienation and Writing Centers

As the review of literature on writing research that employ activity theory analysis demonstrated, student writers write for their own particular contexts. It may be difficult to provide individualized, student-centered writing instruction in a classroom setting. However, the writing center may be a site where individual student writers get personalized AND personal help that they need. In other words, "writing centers can create spaces within campuses that might help counteract feelings of campus alienation" (Bromley, Northway, and Schonberg, 2013, p. 33).

Bromley, Northway, and Schonberg (2013) examined writing center exit survey responses from three institutions: "a large public land-grant university; a medium private selective doctoral university; and a small private selective liberal arts college" (p. 14). While the three institutions examined were not representative of all types of institutions (community colleges and secondary schools were not included), similar results from each institution suggested that these findings could be applied to describe a larger context. The researchers found that writing centers served "as many or more students of color and multilingual writers compared to institutional demographics" (p. 31). This suggest that multilingual writers turn to writing centers for additional support. Students visited writing centers for various reasons. Some came following instructor recommendations, and others came to improve writing in general. However, only 4 % of students identified grades as reasons for their visit. Another finding suggested that conferencing with tutors who served longer and were "immersed in writing center theory and research-informed practice" yielded higher student writer-satisfaction than with tutors who had only served for one semester. The researchers call for "structured pedagogy" for writing tutors which pay more attention to "scholarship and the relational aspects of tutoring."

Present Research

This research attempts to make visible the relational aspects of tutoring. Using Mackiewicz and Thompson's 16-code scheme as a guide, this study focuses on how writing tutors may use effective tutoring strategies to help (or not help) L2 writers to become independent leaners. Further, individuals learn to write in new ways through an operationalization of tool-mediated behaviors (Russell, 1997). The process of "learning to

write," specifically in the context of a writing center, can be analyzed by focusing on how the tutee and the tutor describe and discuss the effectiveness of their conference experiences.

This study also considers the ideas of agency and identity. Russell (2003) explains that, "The development (reconstruction) of agency and identity means appropriating new object/motives, which requires the use (and often transformation) of certain genres (often written ones)". Because of the nature of one-on-one tutoring, tutors may have a first-hand involvement in the process of the tutee's appropriation of the discursive tools (and genres) of academic writing, and in turn, yielding greater power, agency, and identity as an academic writer. Finally, at such a site of transformation, the issue of power also becomes evident. On power, Russell (1997) writes:

> …, genres come historically to fully mediate human interactions in such a way that some people (and some tools) have greater and lesser influence than other because of their dynamic positions in tool-mediated systems or networks…. What an activity theory of genre offers is a way to carry on a principled and concrete analysis of the microstructural mingling of people with mediating tools (including writing) in their circulation. In this view power, race, hegemony, gender, class, and so on are not "permanent fact" but "something that continually happens" through microstructural mediation in activity systems (Ohmann, 1987, p. 286, quoted in Tribur, 1993, p. 392). It allows us to trace … the concrete relations between writing instructions and wider macrostructural social formations.

Using activity theory as a unit of analysis, examines the macro and micro histories of two Japanese university writing centers, and how writing center activities provide support for student writers to become independent writers in an academic setting. Further, through an

examination of interviews and tutor-tutee conversations, this research aims to understand the growing exigency of writing in higher education in Japan.

In summary, this research employs a socio-cultural framework which understands that a cultural specific activity of writing gets produced through social interaction and is embedded in a larger cultural and institutional context. A socio-cultural framework has been a major paradigm to study writing in North America, and studies which use this approach present valuable findings. That is a particular type writing carries specific cultural beliefs and is embedded in specific practices. This research offers a unique perspective of writing center practices by providing a comparison and contrast of teaching of writing in English and Japanese as second languages. Teaching of writing in a bilingual setting is then compared and contrasted with teaching of Japanese writing as a native language. This research highlights the writing center as a place of transformation (and perhaps struggle) and as a support system which enculturate students into a certain kind of literacy. Finally, this research aims to provide a framework for understanding the needs and experiences of the student writers in order to enhance the learning experiences of the tutees that the writing center serve.

III. Chapter II

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to make visible how the US-born idea of writing centers has entered and is spreading in the Japanese higher educational system. Specifically, through a detailed examination of university writing centers, it seeks to understand the growing exigency of writing in Japanese higher education and the roles of writing centers, which lead to new forms and functions that fit the educational contexts and life histories of students and tutors.

This research builds on my MA project, a historical study of the Japanese educational system which traced the history of literacy education back to the Edo Period. The MA research revealed that varying forms and levels of literacy permeated the Edo Period even though what was considered the higher form of literacy was reserved for the *samurai* class. As Japan entered an imperial era of Meiji, however, the idea of literacy started to become associated with a patriarchical, ideal Japanese citizen whose duty was to take part in the country's slogan, which was *Strong Nation, Strong Army.* This movement culminated in WWII. At the end of the WWII, however, American occupation introduced democratic ideas to what was considered a militaristic society. The new democratic education challenged traditional Japanese concepts of literacy when the Americans brought democratic education to Japan. Literacy, then, was used as a vehicle for citizens to participate in democratic society and to carry on their daily lives. The idea of democracy tied to education however, developed into a unique system of schooling in Japan. Because the Japanese people's daily lives were driven by economic prosperity, citizens began to view education as a pathway to successful future. Japanese, especially secondary, education has

evolved into an examination-based system, in which students are not expected to produce writing at an extended length. At the current moment, however, responsive to further socioeconomic changes, Japanese universities are beginning to direct students to write academically in English and Japanese. Why are they asking to write academically? In this context, what does it mean to write academically? The historical approach has revealed that writing in the school setting is no longer required of elite students. Rather, academic writing is being privileged by universities for Japan, as a nation, to achieve an international status. And, an examination of writing center practices may provide clues to understand the exigency of writing in the changing Japanese context. Questions that emerged from this historical approach to understand the spread of writing centers are: Why did writing centers emerge? How is this relatively new (to Japan) instructional context changing the way writing is taught? How is this one-on-one writing instructional model affecting the way student writers see themselves as academic writers? Further, what are the impacts and consequences of this instructional model to the larger educational system? As Japan continues to be an international society, the need for students to write in second (or third) language grows. What are the roles of writing centers in second language writing instruction? What principles of second language acquisition are reflected in L2 writing tutoring? What are (if any) the cultural differences in ways tutors communicate with student writers among different target language instructions? Further, why are they seeing writing in English? Is there a need to write for an international audience?

The list of question surrounding the emergence of writing centers in Japan can only grow. However, this dissertation aims to offer an insight into the international writing center movement by answering the question from the ground up. The question is: How do the

tutees' and tutors' expectations guide their participation in the writing center practices? Specifically, this study examines how the tutors and tutees at one center, John Calvin University, interact and how writing gets taught in the writing center. Furthermore, this study examines how the writing center can serve as a sponsor of literacy to Japanese university student writers. This focused study will help us understand the literacy practices of Japanese university students today and starts to tell us about how the idea of literacy is conceived within specific historical circumstances and specific histories of students and tutors and what literacy can afford. Answers to these questions will thereby give us some clues to understand where literacy is headed in the 21st century Japan.

The historical and cultural approaches can serve as contexts for more detailed, ethnographic study. Further, these contexts can provide clues to understand how literacy may enter a student writer's life; however, in order to understand how a student develops as an academic writer, it is important to consider where this process of learning happens. An examination of tutor-tutee interactions allows the researcher to make visible the kinds of experiences a student writer may have in the process of writing, and these activities that make up the process may be tied to a particular location (in this case, the writing center). The study of the writing center from this perspective will illuminates a student writer's developmental path and in turn, what writing enables the student to do.

This study adopts the theoretical assumption that learning happens through social interactions. Specifically, in order to understand tutor-tutee interactions, this study adopts an ethnographic perspective and uses ethnographic tools (Green and Bloome, 1997) to find out the roles of university writing centers in Japanese higher education. Further, using Activity Theory as an analytical tool, this study aims to understand how writing centers can serve as

sponsors of writing to Japanese university student writers by analyzing tutor-tutee conversations and interviews. Further, ethnographic interviews and observational approaches allow researchers to investigate systems of activities from multiple perspectives and include subjectively defined voices. This study attempts to make visible the lived experiences of Japanese university student writers and their process of becoming literate.

To begin, what is ethnography? Ethnography has its origins in written accounts that anthropologist kept during long-term field work. Cultural ethnographers enter a site to uncover the lives of particular group of people from a ground level (Yang, personal conversation). On the other hand, social scientists and educational researchers use ethnography to study places where learning or socialization happens (ethnographic studies *of* education) and to study places of formal education (ethnographic studies *in* education) (Green and Bloome, 1997). Educational ethnographers adopt ethnographic perspectives as "a theory-building enterprise constructed through detailed systematic observing, recording, and analyzing of human behavior in specifiable spaces and interactions". While qualitative research "stresses the epistemological foundations of research based on these methods… Often absent,…, is grounding of chosen methods in theoretical perspectives or conceptual frameworks from a particular social science discipline" (Heath and Street, 2008, p. 27).

Writing studies researchers are also taking up the idea of ethnography and consider an ethnographic researcher as an "agent of social change" (Cushman, 1996). Building on the idea that writing "mediates the lives of everyday people," (Sheridan, 2012, p. 75) writing researchers use ethnography to show that writing is not a solitary activity whose purpose is to solely inscribe ideas, but an activity which has a potential to carry out and serves multiple purposes, and ultimately in turn, empowers the writer him or herself. Further, ethnography

allows writing studies researchers to examine "how culture and language practices intersect across the life span" (Sheridan, 2012, p. 81) in varied contexts. Using ethnography as a lens, writing researchers can make visible what these language practices may mean and how they may transform the lives of members who participate in cultural activities that are particular to a certain group that they belong. Whether a writing studies researcher chooses to "do ethnographies," "adopt an ethnographic perspective," or "use ethnographic tools" (Green and Bloome as quoted in, Heath and Street, 2008, p. 121), he or she must understand the history of ethnography and adapt its method to suit writing studies practices.

One way to converge different perspectives to study composition is to take an ecological approach. Syverson (1999) uses an ethnographic approach to describe how a network of independent agents self-organize, adapt, and interact in an ecology of composing. An ecological approach "considers the dynamics of systems of people situated in and determining particular social and material environment" (Preface), and in using ethnography, Syverson (1999) captures "the unpredictability, the social and physical and historical contextually, the specificity, and the diversity of composing situations" (p. 204). An ecological approach provides ways to highlight each actor (i.e., the writer, reader, and text) within a composing environment and make visible their intentions and purposes.

This study aims to make visible how, in collaboration with more capable peers (i.e., tutors), Japanese student writers are using writing centers as resources for their development of writing. An ethnographic perspective allows the researcher to uncover students' perspectives on how they see themselves within a larger systems of activities and their internal sense making processes. Nevertheless, this study focuses on student learning at a

specific context. Specifically, I am interested in how Japanese university student writers develop as academic writers through interactions with writing center tutors.

How can we understand writing center activities through an ethnographic perspective? Ethnographers challenge the popular, prescribed use of the term "culture" as a noun – "a fixed thing" - and view it as an "unbounded, kaleidoscopic, and dynamic" verb that "does" (Heath and Street, 2008, p. 7). An ethnographer's purpose is not to define activities in which the members of the target community engage but to make visible individual actors' stories in participating in those activities. By asking question about literacy activities in and out of writing centers, this research aims to make visible how Japanese university student writers see themselves as participants of larger activity systems. Further, ethnographers not only describe details of events and actions people engage, but they also examine history and seek explanations which are linked to and/or may lead to theories. While qualitative research calls for research methods to come out of research questions, ethnography is recursive. Ethnographers move "back-and-forth observing, noting, reading, thinking, observing, and noting constitute data collection toward fieldwork" (Heath and Street, 2008, p. 33).

Ethnography has particular sets of challenges. For example, ethnographers' work is not to make value judgement; Ethnographers must step away from ethnocentrism, as Heath and Street (2008) write, "Every ethnographer must always be on guard against letting one's own beliefs about what *should be* overcome the accuracy of detailing what *is"* (p. 38). It may especially be difficult to move away from ethnocentrism when an ethnographer enters a site, especially, as a participant observer. However, by focusing on recording what is happening at the site rather than evaluating the situation, the ethnographer can move away

from ethnocentrism. Further, an ethnographer must focus on existing, observable data and explanation for those data. By moving back and forth between *etic* and *emic* perspectives ethnographers aim to uncover and communicate "insider" knowledge to "outsiders". An *etic* or *constant-comparative* perspective helps to "understand underling actions and their co-occurring patterns and contextual features," whereas *emic* perspective provides "insider" knowledge (Heath and Street, 2008, p. 44). Nevertheless, ethnography is subjective work and every situation is unique by definition. Similarly, scholarly questions and personal identities are deeply related (Rohan, 2012). Thus, in order to achieve reliability, replicability, and validity, ethnographers must make decisions and explicitly note their research design and method, so someone else could resume research, for example (Heath and Street, 2008).

Finally, because time a researcher can spend on a project is limited, some ethnographers must make decisions to offset the lack of extended fieldwork. This study adopts a "compressed time mode," which allows researchers to enter a site for "brief but intensive periods trying to see everything that is relevant to the participants. This kind of work involves identifying one theme and focusing on it in close details, or following a theme as it plays out within a compressed time frame" (Heath and Street, 2008, p. 63). This study focuses on how writing centers may (or may not) serve as sponsors of writing to Japanese university student writers, and in turn writing serves student writers as agents of social change.

Implications of different ethnographic approaches

Although ethnographic work is politically charged (that is ethnography may influence policy in a long run), a traditional, anthropological, or a phenomenological

ethnography focuses on what is going on in the eye of participants and is not necessarily concerned with carrying out a political agenda. However, there are different strands of ethnography that have specific purposes. For example, institutional ethnography focuses on understanding "people's experience," more specifically how actors who are bounded by an organization socially engage in power and ruling relations. Institutional ethnography work is political; It makes visible how an organization may disempower individuals and how the individuals may approach the organization. An institutional ethnographer's agenda is to improve the organization and social relations, so that it works more effectively for the people they serve.

Nardi (1996) uses ethnography to describe how people use computers in everyday lives and draws on activity theory to explain human-computer interaction. Using ethnographic methods and an activity theory as an analytical lens, she moves human-computer interaction research "beyond the confines of traditional cognitive science" (p. 7), specifically to "a humane, socially responsible scientific practice" (p. 15). Activity theory analysis provides a common language to discuss coherence and generalizability of ethnographic accounts, and in turn moves forward the HCI research.

Finally, Street (1984) uses ethnography to show how the concept of literacy is ideologically-laden and cannot be treated as "neutral" in a given society. Specifically, he introduces the "autonomous" model of literacy, which he argues that literacy serves the interest of a ruling class for social control. Alternatively, he introduces the "ideological" model of literacy, which is culturally and socially embedded within people's lived experiences. These descriptions of literacy became a benchmark for ethnographers whose purpose is to improve educational practices.

This study draws on several strands of ethnography to make visible how Japanese university student writers learn to navigate the terrain of college-level literacy demands through interacting with writing tutors, and in turn how the writing center as a composing environment can improve its practices to better serve its students. One important way to think about the writing center is as in institution where students go for certain services. Institutional ethnography is useful because it teaches to discover "*beyond any one individual's experience* including the researcher's own" (Smith, 2006, p. 1). In other words, by focusing on the specificities of individuals' stories, institutional ethnography allows researchers to make visible how a particular institution is influencing an individual's life, and in turn an individual's experience is influencing the institution.

An activity theory analysis provides another lens to understand the role of writing centers. The individual's experience and interaction with the institution depend on the activity system, which shape the conversations and interactions that the tutee will have with the tutor. Further, an activity system has its own history which leads to how things happen. Institutional ethnography provides a framework to understand how people participate in activity systems.

Institutional ethnography helps actors understand the activity system they participate and work effectively within the system through constituting social relations (Campbell and Gregor, 2004). As Smith (2005) writes, an institutional researcher must:

> "*reorganize the social relations of knowledge of the social* so that people can take that knowledge up as an extension of our ordinary knowledge of the local actualities of our lives. It is a method of inquiry into the social that proposes to enlarge the scope of what becomes visible from that site mapping the relations that connect one

> local site to others. Like a map, it aims to be through and through indexical to the local sites of people's experience, making visible how we are connected into the extended social relations of ruling and economy and their intersections. (p. 29)

This dissertation research is encouraged by this reflective action component of institutional ethnography. However, this current research does not necessarily seek to provide a user's map so that student writers can navigate through the system of the writing center. Rather, it seeks to describe the writing center as a *site* where writing instruction happens in this particular time in Japan's history of education.

This study uses activity theory as a lens to filter through ethnographic data. For example, data collected through interviews can not only describe an activity in generalized terms, but interview data makes visible "the higher conscious levels of actions and objects" (Nardi, 1996, p. 41). When it is done skillfully, interviewing can "bring operation to a conscious level" by motivating the subject to discuss an activity through effectively probing (Nardi, 1996, p. 41). Through ethnographic interviewing, I hope to uncover social, cultural, and political relations of a local site and honor individual actors' personal histories by presenting their stories. (More detailed explanation of ethnographic interviewing can be found in the following Method section.)

Institutional ethnography and an activity system analysis are similar to an ecological approach which has been developed in composition. An ecological approach affords a way to present how these activity systems are interrelated. For instance, institutional ethnographers study texts to map out social relations. Similarly, an ecology of composition approach considers how texts interact with their readers and writers. Texts give us clues to how ruling relations are activated by people who use them (Campbell & Gregor, 2004).

Smith (2006) defines texts as "words, images, or sounds that are set into a material form of some kind from which they can be read, seen, heard, watched, and so on" (p. 66), and ruling relations are "forms of consciousness and organization that are objectified in the sense that they are constituted externally to particular people and places (Smith, 2005, p. 13). It is important to honor actors' personal histories and their relationships their relationships with texts, as Smith (2006) writes:

> People, as individuals, arrive at any moment with their own distinctive histories, their distinctive perspectives, capacities, interests, concerns, and whatever else they may bring as a potentiality to act in a given setting…Diversities of perspectives and activity may be mediated by technologies of all kinds; technologies of all kinds, as they expand, enhance, and transform human work activities, also coordinate them. While institutional ethnography can certainly address any technology from this aspect, the technologies of texts and textuality as these enter into the coordinating of people's work are foundational to its projects. (p. 65)

Locating how texts enter into the actors' lives and their systems of activity gives us clues to understating how writing (and its writer, reader, and text itself) gets "distributed," "embodied," "emerged," and "enacted" (Syverson, 1999).

Similarly, Prior (2009) describes writing as "a stream within the broader flows of semiotic activity" (p. 24). A written utterance does not appear and function in a moment, rather, it gets created in relation to the histories that lead to the utterance and exists in temporal trajectories with potentials to evolve in the future. Pinpointing the discourse in use makes visible the consciousness of people (that is "the situated inner semiotics") and externalized artifacts and actions (Prior, 2009).

Finally, researchers "make research" (Rohan, 2012) by telling their versions of a story about the broader subject they are studying. Campbell and Gregor (2004) write that (institutional) "ethnographers, … cannot stand apart from what they know and what they learn about the world. This is because (according to the social organization of knowledge) they *enact* the world they inhabit and know about, in concert with other people and, of course, with the technologies that people operate" (p.23). Nevertheless, the researcher's responsibility is to recognize that people's actions are intended (whether consciously or unconsciously) and situated in a particular time and place under certain local conditions (Smith, 2006) and to make visible how these activities are mapped out onto a complex system of composition.

Through interviews and video observation of tutor-tutee conversations at a particular writing center, this study seeks to make visible how the center serves as a sponsor of literacy, and in turn how these examples from a particular site can give us clues to understand where literacy might be headed in the global 21st century Japan. This study highlights writing center activities at John Calvin University. Furthermore, interview data from Western University is used to compare and contrast with the findings from John Calvin University.

Using ethnographic approach and an ecology of composition as methods of inquiry, definitions of literacy can be presented by making visible the social, cultural, political, and economic history behind Japanese schooling and the teaching of writing in Japanese higher education. This inquiry may only provide snapshots of instances of writing development, however, through these descriptions I hope to begin to map out a larger picture of a writer's development over a life span.

Methods

This dissertation research project includes an interview study of 11 university student writers and 8 writing center tutors and video recordings of 12 tutoring sessions. Additionally, this study includes an interview sub-study which involved interviewing 5 university writing educators working at private and public institutions in different parts of Japan. This study was approved by the institutional review board at the University of California, Santa Barbara. In addition, it was necessary to obtain an approval from John Calvin University Ethics Committee to conduct research. A research proposal was prepared in Japanese, and the preproposal was accepted after an extensive review. Western University did not require the researcher to submit a research proposal to the university ethics committee.

Informed Consent

Participants signed informed consent forms prior to video recordings of tutoring sessions and/or interviews. The researcher explained that participation is strictly voluntary and that participants could withdraw at any point of a tutoring session (for video recording) and/or an interview.

Data Collection

Data collection involved (1) video recordings of tutoring sessions (John Calvin University) and (2) interviewing (John Calvin University and Western University). In addition, this dissertation research includes a sub-interview study which involved five university writing instructors representing four institutions of higher education in different parts of Japan.

All audio and video recordings were done digitally. Following Heath and Street's (2008) recommendation, I downloaded digital recordings to my computer and a portable data storage unit. I noted the time, location, and name of interviewees, as well as tutors and student-student writers in tutoring sessions, after each day. At the end of each week, I revisited my field notes and log recordings and wrote conceptual memos. Heath and Street (2008) recommend separating field notes from reflections and questions because keeping a separate conceptual memo helps a researcher "hones in on patterns detected, insights or trends, and 'aha!' realizations" (p. 80).

All digital files were kept in a locking cabinet at the researcher's home. Further, a pseudonym was given to each participant and the names of institutions to conceal participants' true identity.

Video Recordings

All tutors at John Calvin University had agreed to be video recorded during their sessions. Once a student-writer agreed to participate in the study, a video camera was set up in a tutoring room. Each tutoring room contained one round table and was occupied by one tutor. A video recording commenced at the beginning of a tutoring session and ended after the tutee left the room.

Unless it was difficult to do so (because of the size of the room or the way the room was set up), the video camera was positioned in a manner, so that it would not video record the participants' faces. When possible, the camera was positioned behind the tutor and the tutee, recording their conversations and capturing the writing activities (e.g., note taking and looking up words in a dictionary) which were happening during those tutoring sessions.

Interviews

Drawing from Spradley's ethnographic and Patton's qualitative interview approaches, I employed a blended method of interview data collection. Spradley (1979) explains three important elements of ethnographic interviews, which are: explicit purpose, ethnographic explanations, and ethnographic questions. In terms of explicit purpose, it is the researcher's responsibility to make it clear the direction of the interview, as Spradley (1979) writes, "without being authoritarian, the ethnographer gradually takes more control of the talking, directing it in those channels that lead to discovering the cultural knowledge of the informant." (p. 59) Ethnographic explanation involves providing informants with explanation of what the project is about, getting permission to record the interview, encouraging informants to use native language, and facilitating smooth transitions during an interview by providing explanations about the direction of the interview and the questions themselves (Spradley, 1979). Patton (2002) also encourages interviewers to provide reinforcement, feedback and other verbal cues about what is important, so that conversations would go smoothly. Finally, ethnographic questions include descriptive question, structural questions, and contrast questions. The aim of these questions is to find out how and for what purposes various terms are used in the informant's native language (Spradley, 1979).

In order to capture the lived experience of the subject, the researcher must withhold any assumptions s/he might have about the target culture and their actors. The purpose of qualitative interview is to "capture how those being interviewed view their world, to learn their terminology and judgments, and capture the complexities of their individual perceptions and experiences" (Patton, 2002, p. 348). In order to gain an insight into the speaker's world, I created semi-structured, open-ended interview protocols (Spradley, 1979).

Several strategies were used, so that interviews would go smoothly. Patton (2002) argues that sensitivity to local language, or *emic* perspective, "enhance[s] data collection during interviewing by increasing clarity, communication respect, and facilitating rapport" (p. 363). Asking clear, singular questions was important in terms of establishing rapport. As Patton (2002) discusses, informants can easily get confused, feel uncomfortable, or hostile if they are asked too many questions at once. Thus, it was important to carefully word questions in order to elicit responses that can be interpreted to answer the research question. Further, it was important to understand the language that participants used in their culture. Murphy (1980) suggests interviewers to do homework or to learn about the program and the person to interview before an interview. In order to understand the historical and institutional contexts of Japanese higher education, I conducted a historical research (my master's thesis) on the Japanese educational system. This research (in addition to the literature review on writing centers) provided the researcher with a level-ground to understand specific terms the informants used during the interviews.

Four interview protocols were created: For (1) writing center directors, (2) center staff and tutors, (3) student-writers who used writing centers, and (4) university instructors who were involved in writing education.

The protocol (1) for writing center directors was organized under the following areas of discussion: (a) their writing center history and operation, (b) writing center network within and outside of Japan, (c) directors' activities related to writing education outside of running a writing center, (d) tutor training, (e) directors' own experience with writing centers, (f) directors' writing activities and processes, (g) directors' perspectives on academic writing

The protocol (2) for center staff/tutors was organized under the following areas of discussion: (a) staff/tutor background (duration of employment, recruitment processes), (b) staff/tutor training, (c) descriptions of a successful tutoring, (d) tutor-student relationship, (e) staff/tutor responsibilities, (f) staff/tutors' own writing activities and processes, (g) staff/tutors' perspectives on academic writing.

The protocol (3) for student-writers who used writing centers was organized under the following areas of discussion: (a) information about the student (major, year, and classes), (b) center usage (how often, first-time user, and reason for the visit), (c) expectations from the visit, (d) differences between writing classroom and writing center instruction, (e) ideal tutoring session, (f) tutor-student relationship, (g) student-writers' own writing activities and processes, (h) student-writers' perspectives on academic writing.

Finally, the protocol (4) for university instructor who were involved in writing education was organized under the following areas of discussion: (a) current writing educational trend in Japan, (b) writing educator network within and outside of Japan, (c) instructors' role in writing education at their institution, (d) instructors' writing activities and processes, (e) instructors' perspectives on academic writing.

Each interview lasted from thirty minutes to one hour. The interviews were recorded using a small digital audio recorder. Then the interviews were transcribed verbatim including non-verbal cues (e.g., pauses) between the researchers and the interviewees.

Data Analysis

Analysis of Interview Data

As Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe, data analysis was an inductive process. Rather than entering the field with an intention of testing a predetermined hypothesis, the aim of the

interview research was to "describe" the writing center activities "in detail" (Ashley, 2012, p. 102). As for transcription, contextual cues, such as pauses and other verbal cues (e.g., "uh-huh"), were ignored since *what* was said (or the content of the interview) was more important than *how* it was said. Once the interviews were transcribed, it was coded to look for themes. Coding made visible different orientations and expectations of writing from the interviewees, and in turn, it allowed the researcher to use a set of codes as a "heuristic" (Saldana, 2013, p.8). Themes were derived after repetitions of codes were located within the transcripts.

Additionally, the interview data gathered from the tutees and the tutors was used to "triangulate and test the consistency" (Buell, 2009) of findings from the video observation. Having two kinds of data (video observation and interviews) allowed the researcher to expand the range of analysis. Comparing and contrasting of the data allowed the researcher to make visible that the findings were not idiosyncratic.

Analysis of Video Recordings

This study adopts and adapts Mckiewicz and Thompson's analytical methods in their 2015 study, in which they analyzed 10 successful conferences. This was one of the first writing center studies which examined tutor-tutee conversations and developed grounded categories of effective tutoring strategies. However, for this dissertation study, I needed to add additional codes because in order to examine cultural differences in ways tutors interact with tutee, it was necessary to consider how the tutee responded to the tutor's conferencing strategies. Furthermore, additional codes were needed (I will specify the additional codes in the following *Analysis* section) to describe cultural difference emerged between the tutors of

speakers of different languages. The following sections, first, summarize their analytical methods, and second, explain their categories of analysis.

Mackiewicz and Thompson's (2015) Analysis

Mackiewicz and Thompson administered two-leveled analysis: Macro-level and Micro-level analyses. At the Macro-level, the researchers analyzed tutor strategies in the three stages: the Opening, Teaching, and Closing stages. The activities in the Opening Stage mainly consisted of greeting and negotiating agenda. The Teaching Stage was the longest in duration, and it was in this stage where the bulk of their Micro-level analysis happened. Mackiewicz and Thompson employed topic episodes to analyze the structure and flow of teaching strategies. Topic episodes are defined as "monologic or dialogic strings of conversation that coherently address one topic." (p. 16). Within topic episodes, the researchers differentiated episodes that began with tutors' use of cognitive scaffolding strategies ("initiate"); episodes that began with tutors' use of instruction or motivational strategies ("launch"); and episodes that student writers (tutees) introduced ("introduce"). The beginning of the Closing Stage was usually marked with a tutor's question where s/he asked the tutee whether or not his/her questions were answered. Possible activities during the Closing Stage consisted of summarizing the conference discussion and goal setting.

Instruction, Cognitive Scaffolding, and Motivational Scaffolding

Mackiewicz and Thompson (2015) draws on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZDP) and the idea of scaffolding to describe successful conferencing strategies, as they write:

> The theoretical framework associated with scaffolding and the ZPD is relevant for writing center tutoring. The emphasis on teaching as a means for the cultivation of

> intelligence, rather than viewing intelligence as an absolute genetic trait, and the notion of teaching as the moving forward of development reflect an optimism about student's abilities to grow as learners that many writing center tutors share. Intersubjectiviey and contingency support the well-known advice for writing center tutors to start where students are and to teach each student as an individual (p. 22)

Further, "[e]ssential to successful scaffolding is the tutor's awareness of the upper and lower boundaries that define a student's target area for teaching" (p. 20). In other words, experienced and effective tutors are able to assess a student writer's current writing ability and to guide the student to reach the highest level of achievement s/he can make at the time in the course of life-long writing development with some help from a more experienced mentor.

Mackiewicz and Thompson (2015) identified three categories of effective writing tutoring strategies: Instruction; Cognitive Scaffolding; and Motivational Scaffolding. Instruction strategies simply "tell, suggest, or explain new concept to supplement students' current understanding" (p. 25). Although writing center lore condemns top-down (or more direct) approach to tutoring writing, more recent research (See Thompson et al., 2009) suggest that student writers can greatly benefit from explicit directions and positive feedback. On the other hand, cognitive scaffolding strategies "create opportunities for a student write to construct his or her own meaning with a tutor's assistance, and they guide a tutor's use of strategies by exposing a student writer's lack of understanding" (p. 33). Through cognitive scaffolding, experienced tutors help student writers notice areas they need to improve and guide them through the process of working out the problems. Finally, experienced tutors use motivational scaffolding to "encourage student writers by building

and maintaining a sense of rapport and feelings of solidarity and thus can increase student writer's motivation" (p. 37). An experienced tutor provides explicit instruction when needed and provides guidance so that the tutee can carry on tasks on his/her own. However, the most important quality of an effective tutor may be to be able to relate to and to have conversations about experiences and challenges that the tutee has with writing.

Other Types of Data

Textual analysis was used to study writing center brochures and other print material. Specifically, content analysis was used to analyze for themes in ways the Japanese university writing centers, including John Calvin University and Western University, described themselves.

Research Sites

John Calvin University

John Calvin University is a small-medium sized (approximately 9,000 students), private university located in the outskirts of Tokyo. Although the majority of its students come from the Tokyo-metropolitan area, the university's emphasis on global communication draws students from all over Japan.

The founder of John Calvin University started a missionary work in China in 1921. In the late 1920s, however, he took some time out from missionary work to study abroad and receive a degree in Divinity in the US. Upon his return to Japan from China in 1945, he founded John Calvin University with a founding philosophy which "encapsulate[s the college's] commitment to teaching, global perspectives, and 'learning not just for oneself but for the betterment of others'" (A Message from the President). His school grew quickly. A junior high school and a high school were added in 1947 and 1948, respectively. In 1950,

a two-year junior college was added, and a four-year university was added in 1966. It then introduced a kindergarten in 1968 and a graduate school in 1993. John Calvin University is an escalator school, in which students who attend John Calvin Junior and Senior High School can continue their study at John Calvin University without taking an additional entrance examination as long as they meet a minimum grade requirement. All students must pass an entrance examination to enter the John Calvin school system at a junior high or a senior high school level.

John Calvin University aims to "foster global citizens on the basis of Christian values. The President describes John Calvin University community as "a cosmopolitan society, offering a perfect environment for study to students who are eager to gain a global perspective". Through a broad liberal arts and an international education, John Calvin University seeks to cultivate citizens who are able to make their own decisions. The university "seek[s] to nurture individuals who will be able to understand others and deal with circumstances in a spirit of cooperation, no matter what the situation".

John Calvin University has nearly 9,000 students, including graduate and international students. The university is comprised of a College of Arts and Sciences and three professional colleges, as well as a graduate division. John Calvin University also offers doctoral degrees. Additionally, the university has over 140 partner schools in more than twenty countries and region around the world

As an international institution of higher education, John Calvin University emphasizes on language education. The university offers bilingual tutoring services to undergraduate, student writers who are writing in English and Japanese as a second

language. The center is housed within the general education building and works closely with faculty of the English and Japanese language departments.

Western University

Western University is a prestigious, national university in western Japan. Western University was founded in 1949 under the principle, “a single unified university, free and pursuing peace” and continues to develop under the five guiding principles: The pursuit of peace; The creation of new forms of knowledge; The nurturing of well-rounded human beings; Collaboration with the local, regional, and international community; and Continuous self-development. The university recognizes its role as a national university which “should be a knowledge center that plays a leading role in building a knowledge-based society”. Western University defines comprehensive research university as “a university that has a graduate school of advanced curricula as well as undergraduate programs in a wide variety of academic disciplines, a university that produces high percentages in conferring of doctorate degree, and a university that achieves outstanding research results”.

Western University has over 15,000 students, including undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students of both domestic and international origins. Although it is a regional school, its prestige and emphasis on research draws students from all over Japan and other parts of the world.

In 2014, Western University was selected as one of the 13 Type A (top type) universities to support the creation of super global universities by the Japanese government. Further, Western University aims to become one of the global top 100 universities within the next 10 years by “continuously producing global talents and creating knowledge while promoting university reforms centering on the twin pillars of educational and research

capabilities" (the President). Western University strives to "establish its status as a world-class research university" by "continu[ing] its commitments to fundamental research activities… to contribute to the continuous development of knowledge based culture in Japan".

Following the privatization of national universities in 2004, the trend of deregulation intensified inter-university competition. Western University developed and adopted, first a mid-term plan and then a long-term vision to provide guidelines for further advancement as a "higher educational institution". Western University explains its visions as follows:

> As a regional center, the University will reinforce its general education so as to fulfill its basic mission as a comprehensive research university. As a global and national center representing Japanese universities, [Western] University plans to become a global hub of education and research in the University's strong disciplines and play a leading role in these disciplines.

Moreover, Western University vows to "develop applied research programs so as to meet social needs". Western university emphasizes cultivating "well-rounded character[s]" among their students by reinforcing general education in both undergraduate and graduate courses. Finally, Western University endeavors to "foster students' attitudes of studying on their own initiative, along with creativity and ability, to resolve problems with their own academic knowledge".

Western university has responded to the changing social demands and expectations by developing and executing plans and visions to fulfill fundamental missions of a higher educational institution. These plans reflect their staff, faculty members, and students'

opinions, which make Western University a representative of Japan's prestigious, national universities.

Western University opened its writing center in 2012. The center is located in the main library and offers tutoring in Japanese to native-speakers and Japanese as a second language writers. The tutoring service is open to both undergraduate and graduate student writers. Additional on a limited basis, the center offers English writing consultation to graduate student writes and faculty.

In order to understand how the tutors' and tutees' expectations guide their participation in the writing center practices, it was important to examine tutor –tutee conversations during writing conferencing, as well beliefs and attitudes towards writing centers practices from the tutor's and tutee's perspectives. Thus, this study involved gathering video observations and interview data. Study questions will be presented in categories along with the corresponding data sets in the following chapters.

The primary focus of this study is to understand the roles and functions of university writing centers in Japanese higher educational context. Secondarily, this research incorporates an interview sub-study which involved six university writing instructors from five different institutions across Japan to understand the current university-level writing practices and how writing centers may (or may not) fit in the picture. The following chapter presents findings from the interview sub-study to explain the current state of writing education in Japanese universities.

IV. Chapter III

University Writing Education in Japan

Writing centers were introduced to Japanese university campuses in the early 2000s. In order to understand the significance of the time and context in which the writing center was introduced to Japan, this chapter describe writing education at Japanese universities in the last decade. Understanding this larger context is necessary with regard to pinpointing where the writing center fits within the system of the Japanese higher education. Teaching of writing in higher education is not a widely studied topic in Japan, and because no literature covers the current status of writing education in Japanese universities, it was necessary to speak to experts who are involved in writing education. The narrative in this chapter is a composite of information provided by experts and supported by documentary information available. The sub-interview study, whose aim was to understand the background behind the spread of writing centers in Japan, took place in December, 2014 and over the summer of 2015. Six writing educators from five different institutions were interviewed. Out of six interviews, one was conducted in English. In the findings and the discussion of the findings below, any interview data which was collected in Japanese are presented with an English translation . The aim of this chapter is to highlight different perspectives on the current state of writing education in Japanese universities in order to seek answers to questions: How is academic writing understood in Japan and how is it taught? Furthermore, in what language are Japanese universities requiring their students to write?

Participants

All six are professors at major universities, which range from a prestigious national and private universities to a mid-level national university. All participants have backgrounds

in different disciplines, but each of them now have a central interest in teaching of writing either in English or in Japanese. All participants but one received master's (and doctorate) education in an English speaking country; one participant's (whose focus was teaching of Japanese writing) educational experience was limited to Japan.

Writing Education in Japanese Schools

As the Introduction revealed, opportunities to write for Japanese students throughout their school-lives are scarce. Professor Sato (pseudonym), a *Kokugo kyoiku* (National language education) specialist, feels that compared to the systems of education in the West (for example, Australia, the US, and Europe) the tradition of writing education in Japan itself is very much in a developing phase or in many cases, much behind other leading countries. In addition to the examination system which focuses on getting the right answer, Professor Sato suspects that the reason why writing is not traditionally taught in Japanese primary and secondary school is because of a relatively large class size. An average teacher to student ratio of 1 to 35 prevents teachers from incorporating the process approach which involves one-on-one student-teacher conferencing along the way.

A major obstacle that prevents Japanese students to write academically is the entrance examination culture, as Professor Smith (pseudonym) explains:

> [W]hen you get into junior high, high school, especially in 進学校 (*shingakuko*) which focuses on testing, then education becomes much more directive and focuses on testing. [By the time students enter universities, they] have been studying for the entrance exam, so they are focusing on getting the right answers. Working by themselves and taking the test by themselves in isolation, and then where the whole focus of education is getting the score, to weave them into a more mature academic

environment where they are problem solving, there is not necessary right answers and working with other people.

Because of the academic culture which enforces accuracy, Japanese students may be able to construct grammatically correct sentences, but the idea of communicating through writing is foreign to them. As for the type of writing itself, students are given few opportunities to write 機能的な文章 (*kinouteki na bunsho*, functional texts). While students are encourage to write about everyday lives and feelings and emotions associated with various events, they do not practice writing texts with specific purposes and for a specific audience.

Another characteristic of academic writing is citation practice. Incorporating proper citation is a particular challenge for Japanese student writers. While some Japanese elementary school (3rd grade level) textbooks are starting to introduce the idea, teacher are unable to teach proper citation methods because such idea is new to them. The examination culture plays another role in the lack of citation practice among Japanese student writers. As a way to increase enrollment, many Japanese universities have started to incorporate AO 入試 (admissions office administrated entrance examination) in recent years. While the US university system has moved towards standardized testing score based admission, the Japanese have interpreted the AO-style admission to be an evaluation system which values students' potential for success which is not necessarily shown by their academic records (Ehara, 2010). As a result, Japanese universities are beginning to incorporate short essays as part of admission requirements. These short essay tasks ask students to state their opinions on various topics without providing relevant readings. Professor Sato assumes that because Japanese students are trained to produce such short essays in a relatively short time by

formulating their ideas in their heads, the idea of drawing from others is hard for them to grasp.

While Japanese schools may not necessarily teach how to write these short essays (小論文 or *shō-ronbun*), cram schools offer special courses for aspiring college entrants to practice this type of writing. Furthermore in bookstores all over Japan, there are abundant short essay study-aid books (参考書 or *sankō*-sho) which are made available by many publishers. These circumstances create a false illusion that *shō-ronbun* is college-level writing, and many students find themselves underprepared when they enter universities and colleges.

Writing Education in Japanese Universities

As previously discussed, Japanese students (up until they enter college) are exposed to a relatively few opportunity to write in a school setting, and this interview study revealed that teaching of writing in a classroom setting is a relatively new idea in Japanese universities. As opposed to the US where First-Year Composition (FYC) is a norm and required of almost all incoming freshmen, Japanese university students do not generally take (nor are required to complete) writing classes in their native language. On the other hand, some Japanese students are exposed to English writing which is taught as part of college English courses, as Professor Tanaka (pseudonym) recalls her Japanese writing experience in college:

> 日本は日本語で受ける授業でレポートはありましたけど、書き方や、学術的な表現等の指導は一切なしで、そのまま書いて出しても OK でした。日本で学部生の時に英語の授業でパラグラフライティングから習って、英語のほう

はきちんと教育を受けたかんじ。日本語のほうは、幼いころから培ってきた日本人として培ってきた作文能力でそのまま上がってきたかんじでしたね。

As a student in a Japanese university, I had to write a few papers for classes I took in Japanese. But we received no instructions on how to write nor teaching of academic expressions. It was OK to write as we spoke. On the other hand in my English classes, I learned paragraph writing and other structures of writing. Teaching of English writing was more systematized. In Japanese, I wrote as we were instructed to write *sakubun* (personal essays), an ability to express emotions and feelings that we cultivate since childhood. (My translation)

Professor Smith also attests to this sentiment:

> What you hear again and again from meeting Japanese academics about teaching students how to write academic, research papers in English is that, "We don't get any instruction like that in Japanese." Or researchers who's published in English say, "I never learn to do that," or "I only learned how to do citations," or "When I wrote my thesis in English, I didn't know anything [about writing] in Japanese".

While he acknowledges "this kind of popular academic culture view of academic writing is not taught in Japanese," Professor Smith feels that there is something very cultural that is going on around the teaching of writing in Japanese universities.

While teaching of English writing is more "systematized", such as "these MLA or APA and these various formal systems," for example, Japanese students have traditionally learned how to write from their faculty advisor or from upper classmen (and women) who belonged to their seminar in a tutorial process. Professor Smith explains:

> [Japanese students] kind of learn the process about writing and it tends to come from their adviser, who tends not to be a specialist in writing. They are field specialists, so what they learn about how to write academically will come from this tutorial process that would vary hugely in quality.

In fact, many Japanese university students are not required to demonstrate an ability to write clearly and logically in order to receive undergraduate degrees because 1) The system of examination (as opposed to essay writing, for example) continues to be a main form of evaluation in higher education, 2) Not all students are required to write a senior thesis for graduation, and 3) Only a handful of student will continue their study to become researchers. Thus, due to lack of experience and practice, there is a varying level of quality in writing produced by Japanese university students.

Professor Ito's (pseudonym) story confirms this issue of quality. When Professor Ito first began teaching writing (in Japanese) at a national university where she taught, she was shocked to come across a number of senior thesis papers, (which were approved and whose authors have graduated from the university) which consisted of largely plagiarized materials, such as a copy of an entire book chapter and/or published articles. Furthermore, some of senior thesis papers resembled a journal entry which an elementary or junior high school student might turn in after going on a field trip. In these "field trip" papers would contain a vast amount of completely irrelevant information, such as pictures of the lunch they enjoyed. This example shows that there are currently no sets of writing standards that is used to assess Japanese university students' writing abilities.

This experience prompted Professor Ito to create a first year Japanese writing course. "Basics" ("ベーシック" *beishikku*) is a course that is required of almost all incoming

students at the university, which houses seven faculties – of Letters, Science, Engineering, Education, Medicine, Life Sciences, and Law. About 1,600 students out of 1,800 freshmen take this course (it is an elective for students of science and education), and Professor Ito feels that the class is making an impact on the students. While the actual teaching of writing may be described as formulaic, such as paragraph writing, topic sentences, outlines, citations, and references, students also practice how to state their own ideas and opinions by building on to what have previously said by paraphrasing and using quotations as evidence. It is a challenge for many student writers, but Professor Ito feels that by the end of the course, students are able to produce "academic paper-like" texts, which are different from those "field trip" papers which only lists what students did, saw, and/or felt during an event. This course alone does not produce academic writers, however, she hopes that when students reach the time to start working on their senior thesis papers, they will remember some of the "rules," so that the quality of papers as a whole will improve.

Some universities are taking up the notion of academic writing in the form of English writing. For example, another national university (where two of the informant taught) began its academic English writing program in 2008, first, for science students. Their academic writing program supports students who are taking freshmen English course by providing one-on-one tutoring. Since then, the program has expanded to offer support for humanities students. Freshmen at this university take English writing courses as part of 初年次セミナール(*Shonenji Zeminaaru* or freshman seminar) whose aim is to リセットする (to "reset" the mind of Japanese students who have gone through a competitive systems of examinations). The course, in fact, is built on the assumption that 共同学習(*kyodo gakushu* or group study, group activities) is integral to learning in a university setting. Freshman

seminar is aimed to "expose students to academic research, academic life in closer contact with faculty members," so that they can learn "the way researchers think, academics think about it, in hoping that it would be useful for them as they are moving ahead" (Professor Smith). Nevertheless, the examination culture haunts freshman seminar and teaching of writing, as Professor Smith explains:

> [T]here is this move among some universities to kind of "Reset" the thinking of students, but there is institutional barriers to that. Most Japanese academics are used to the [tradition of examinations]. They learned that way, so they are used to teaching that way. So, it is a challenge we are facing right now

Freshman seminar classes at this university are taught by faculty of many different disciplines. In other words, there are few writing experts who can teach effective communication through writing.

The focus of these freshman seminar courses is not necessarily writing, however. The Japanese university system has now entered a 全入時代 (*Zennyujidai*) where anybody can go to college. While the number of private universities has increased dramatically since the 90's, the number of 18 year olds has been in a steady decline. Many, especially private, universities are now admitting students "who are at a level of caliber who would not have gone to college 20 – 30 years ago, or they have not gone to that particular university" (Professor Smith). Universities are admitting students with mixed level of performance in order to fill their seats, and writing is one of the areas where students need a lot of reinforcement or practice. The idea of "writing as a subject of study" may be foreign to Japanese universities, yet, writing as an integral part of learning in higher education is beginning to taking roots as part of freshman seminars on university campuses across Japan.

English Writing at Japanese Universities

Although some universities are beginning to incorporate English (and Japanese) writing as part of first-year courses, English writing at Japanese universities is generally offered as part of a mandatory English course which deals with all four (listening, speaking, reading and writing) skills. While some instructors incorporate writing instruction and assignments, if the instructor of an English class focuses more on oral and aural communication, students in that class do not have any opportunity to practice English writing.

Professor Suzuki (pseudonym) is one of the teachers who emphasizes writing in such a course. The university where she teaches as a system does not provide any guidelines as to how teaching of academic writing should be dealt. Rather, she explains that whether or not writing is a component of an English class is up to individual teachers. Further, each department has different policy; while some departments mandate English teachers to use the same textbook, others give complete autonomy to individual teachers on the material and content of the class. Professor Suzuki presumes that this can be explained by the fact that most of her students (She teaches English to students in the faculty of law) will end up working for a company rather than becoming researchers, therefore, they are not required to write their senior theses in English nor have a need to engage in English writing in their future workplace. Nevertheless, Professor Suzuki feels that academic writing in any language is integral to university education. She explains:

> 大学は教育機関であると同時に研究機関であると思っています。多くの学生は研究者にはならないですけど、大学で学問をする以上は、学術的な文章を書く力を養うというのは必須だと思っています。例えばスキルだけではな

く、どうして剽窃がダメなのか、学生も「コピペはだめだ」と理解していますが、どうしてダメなのかというところまで踏み込むと、２年生であっても答えられなかったりするんです。規則として理解しているが、その背景に先人たちが築き上げてきた英知に対する敬意を払うとか、自分の言と他者の言を区別するとか、レファレンスの重要性をしっかり話す、ということを心掛けています。規則を教えるだけではなくて、その背景や意味まで理解して、学術的文章を理解しているというふうに見えると思うんです。

I believe that universities function as an educational institution and a research institution at the same time. The majority of graduates will not become researchers, however, as long as they are studying at the university level, they should learn to write academically. For example, they need to understand why plagiarism is wrong. They understand copying and pasting is wrong, but if they were asked to explain why you cannot do that, even a second year student cannot answer. They understand it as a rule, but what I want them to realize is that, as academic writers, they need to learn how to “stand on the shoulders of giants” and to differentiate their own ideas and opinions from others. I try to explain to my students why and how it is important to make references. I want my students to understand not only the “rules” of academic writing, but to think about what it means to write academically. (My translation)

Further, Professor Suzuki adds:

（書くことは）コミュニケーションとして大切。大学を出たらエッセイを書くことはないが、そういう点ではジャンル。読み手はだれか、目的は何か、

どういうふうに書いた ら伝わるか。最終的にはアカデミックパーパスではなくてスペシフィックパーパスになっていくと思うが、そのあたりの応用できるように基礎として学生の意識付けをお手伝いしたい。

Writing is an important means of communication. Students will not write essays once they graduate from college. Because of that it is important to discuss genres of writing. Who are the readers? What are the purposes of writing? Students will eventually write for specific purposes, rather than continuing to write academically. But, because they will need to communicate with specific audiences in whatever settings they will find themselves after leaving college, I want to help my students with attaining basic writing skills and becoming conscious of their audience and purpose for writing. (My translation

Nevertheless, as previously mentioned, not all English teachers approach teaching of writing (if they teach it at all) the same way as Professor Suzuki, and many Japanese student writers receive little to no instruction in English writing.

Yet, the Japanese expectation towards English writing is changing, and there is a top-down (from the governmental level) pressure to write in English. While not all Japanese students are research-bound, those who are in the STEM fields are strongly encouraged by their universities to publish works in English. Many institutions of higher education receive federal grants based on factors, such as a number of academic papers published by the institutions. Further, the language of publication in the last couple of decades is changing in Japan. Professor Smith explains:

In the last 20 – 30 years, many Japanese scholarly organizations who used to publish journals mainly in Japanese with maybe English abstract, are now switching. They

publish the papers in English and the abstract is in both English and Japanese. It depends on the field. There are fields that are rooted in Japanese society. Main fields of medicine and public health, fields like nursing, where they are doing research related to Japanese medical system, then it's still valuable to publish in Japanese. But many fields where there is not a tie to a specific country, basic sciences are certainly like that, then basically the researches are all in English.

Whether English is used as a medium for teaching writing or publishing in English is the object, teaching of English writing is a challenge for many Japanese-native English language educators. Professor Tanaka explains:

（日本人で英語を教えている先生から）感じるのは、英語のライティングを教えることを敬遠するという感じ。一つにはライティングって書かせないといけないから、そうするとみるっていうのが大変だ、っていうそういうイメージがあると思います。実際にはライティングを教えていても、ピアレビューとか教師が全部添削する必要ないですよね。本当は教師が全部見る必要なくって、いろいろできるんだけど、やはりライティングを専門にしてないとそこら辺のイメージがわかないと思う。ライティング＝教師がしんどい。っていう思い込みがあるのと、二つ目は、どこかに日本人で英語教師だと英語のネイティブではないから、見るなりコメントするにしても常に自信がないというか、どうしてもわからない部分もあるので、それが教師として例えばリーディングの活動だと読んで日本語に訳させるだとか、訳読させなくても内容ごとに教えるとか、もっと内容を深めるというのだったら、そんなに細かい英語の知識がなくてもいい。英語が母語であるかどうかとかあまり関係

ない。でも書かせるとなるとネイティブではないので例えば冠詞のルールとか細かい部分が指導しきれない。指導しきれないとなると教師として苦手意識というか、１００パーセント自信を持って指導しきれないがゆえに、苦手意識というか「いやだな。」と思ってしまうかもしれませんね。

I feel that Japanese-native English educators tend to avoid teaching writing in English. For one, they want to avoid the workload associated with teaching of writing, such as commenting on papers. That, in fact, is not entirely true. Writing teachers can incorporate peer reviewing and other teaching strategies to lighten the workload, but it may be hard to grasp that if you do not have a specific training in teaching of writing. I think Japanese teachers believe that writing tasks create more work for teachers. Another reason is that because they are not native speakers of English, they are not confident about their own English abilities. They are fine with assigning more controlled tasks, such as translation and comprehension, but they are not confident about providing detailed comments in English. Because they are not one hundred percent confident in their English abilities, they might stay away from teaching of English writing. (My translation)

Mastering the English language has always been a challenge for Japanese scholars and university students alike. Professor Yoshida (pseudonym), another English writing educator, feels that Japanese university students are intimidated by “the native speaker” of English. In her teaching of writing, Professor Yoshida tries to shift her students’ focus from “the native speaker” to a larger issue of communication.

学生はネーティブスピーカーという”呪い”にかけられていると思うんですが、オーディエンスがネーティブスピーカーだとは限らない。むしろ、ネー

ティブスピーカーじゃない人が読んでわかる英語を書かないといけない、と強調しています。例えばイディオムを使わない。特定の文化の人しかわからないレファランスを使わない。… 読み手がわかるものを書くということがすごく大切。わざと難しい言葉を使うのではなく、意味がいくつもあって、読み手が書き手と違うものを想像してしまわない言葉を使いましょう、とよく言っています。… 伝えることは「目的が変わったんだ」本当のコミュニケーションを目的としているから、文法があっているだけでは、単語が間違っていない、というだけではだめで、読み手が頭の中に持っていることを正しくつかんでくれるように工夫をしましょう、と。

Students are haunted by the image of "an ideal native speaker of English". However, even if they are asked to write in English, that does not mean their writing will be read by native speakers. I try to teach my students, "You need to write in English that is easy to understand for a broader audience by, for example avoiding culturally specific references. …It is important to write from the reader's perspective. Students should not focus on using complicated vocabulary or sentence structures. Rather, they should pay attention to the purpose of the text. Writing grammatically correct sentences and using correct vocabulary is not enough. Students need to make effort to communicate what they really want to convey with their reader. (My translation)

English writing is taught at Japanese universities by instructors who sees writing as a means of communication. However, teaching of writing in the classroom is not supported by all English teachers at the university level, thus, teachers of English writing may seem isolated at times. Writing center professionals have also felt the same kind of isolation in Japanese

universities where the idea of such center is foreign. Writing Centers Association of Japan (WCAJ) was first established in 2009 to serves as a forum for teachers of English writing to interact with colleagues and exchange ideas, as Professor Smith explains:

> Writing centers are very much focused on their individual institutions, so there is no natural reasons for writing center people to be working with people from outside of their institutions. They are serving the needs of their students. It's natural for them to feel isolated. They are both isolated from other institutions because I don't know if any writing centers are cross institutional, so they feel isolated from other places. Also many writing centers within the institutions are somewhat isolated institutionally… writing centers do not charge for the services they provide. So therefore even though writing centers want more students to come, having more students come does not lead them to getting more resources, so it puts them in a peculiar position to be in. …They have to convince the institution of the necessity… [It takes many years] to prove what [the writing center does] is valuable, and creating the framework and getting the support to do it… So within the institution, writing centers are often isolated.

Since its establishment, WCAJ has expanded its member profile to teachers of Japanese writing. Whether or not teaching of English writing is directly influencing the teaching of Japanese writing is unclear. Nevertheless, "the fact that more and more Japanese academics are writing in English where rules and traditions are stricter…[and] the awareness of … a rhetorical and contrasted rhetoric style of thinking [between English and Japanese academic writing]" (Professor Smith) present as evidence for collaborations between the teachers of English and Japanese writing on Japanese university campuses.

Writing is Thinking – A Genre Perspective

Professor Smith described the concept of academic writing as "knowing what you need to do to succeed a set series of rules or guidelines or parameters… [and it is also] a skill you can take anywhere with you, any type of thing you do". In other words, academic writing is a genre that allows student writers (and other writers who participate in that genre) to participate in the conversations within their discourse communities and to move forward the understanding of the topics of discussion. Students may be used to being a consumer of knowledge, especially in an examination-based schooling system, however, with an ability to write academically, they will be able to create and transform, and even transmit, knowledge as members of the academia.

An act of writing allows a student writer to externalize their thinking and evaluate it from a different perspective. Through writing, Japanese university students, perhaps for the first time in their academic career, have an opportunity to experience a different kind of learning. Professor Yoshida explains:

> 人間は考える、いろいろな思考をしますが、それをライティングで自分の目の前に表してみない絶対客体化できない、と思うんです。例えばクリティカルシンキングで、私が信じていることだとか、私が当たり前だと思っていることをどうやって客体たらいいかというと、まず書いてみないといけない。書いてみて初めて自分の思考、自分の間にちょっと距離ができる。読めるから。そうすることによって、直すべきことを、人に読んでもらうのは非常にいいと思います。だからピアレビューをする。まず初めに自分と自分の考えの間に適切な、知的な距離を持つのが第一歩だと考えます。

We as human are thinkers or think about things. But, unless you produce a manuscript in a form of texts and put it in front of you, you will not be able to see it from other perspectives. For example, when you are trying to think critically, you must write your ideas and beliefs on a piece of paper. It is only after writing when you can have a bit of distance between you and your thinking, and that is because you can read it. Only after having some distance with your thoughts, you can begin to see areas to improve. Having someone read your text is also a very good idea, and that is why I incorporate peer reviewing in my class. You need to have an appropriate, intelligent distance between you and your thinking to make intelligent decisions. (My translation).

Further, the following quotation encapsulates how Japanese university students are beginning to have different attitude towards learning.

(書くことによって)「考える」ということがわかる。「考えろ」と言われるが、考えているのに言われるのはどうしてですか？というのが一年生の最初の質問ですね。それを、「あなたは考えているのじゃなく、思い出しているんですよ。」と。「考える」っていうのはそういうことじゃないんですよ、と伝えてあげる。　それが、「考えるってこんなに楽しいんだ。」と、その声が聞こえるといろいろあるけど頑張ってよかった、って思います。本気で作っていこうという気持ちが出てくるんです。

[Through writing], students learn “to think”. Many freshmen say, “I am thinking, but professors tell me to ‘think’. What do you want us to do?” Then I tell them, “You are not thinking. You are remembering.” By the end of the first semester though, those students will say, “I didn’t know ‘thinking’ was so interesting and exciting.” Hearing

students say that makes me so happy and want to continue teaching writing. (Professor Ito, My translation).

Teaching of writing, specifically the type of writing that calls for analytical thinking and logical approach to problem solving, is a relatively new subject that is beginning to be taught in the Japanese university setting. It is at a beginning phase, however, with the lead of enthusiastic teachers, such as Professor Ito, its value is beginning to be recognized in universities campuses across Japan.

The interviews revealed that there is an open channel between the teachers of English writing and the teachers of Japanese writing. In the following testimony, Professor Suzuki discusses in the context of teaching of English writing. Nevertheless, it reveals that teaching of writing might help Japanese university students become aware of how writing can be a representation of themselves.

英語のクラスに特化していえば、パラグラフライティング、基礎から始まってトピックセンテンス、サポーティングセンテンス、コンクルーディングセンテンス、構成としてきちんとできているかということも大事だが、きちんと自分の主張を支える根拠として、論拠として提示できているか、なかなか日本語の文章作成では、例えばトピックセンテンス等は高校までの文章作成で出てこない概念だと思うので、そのあたりは大学の１，２年生、初期の段階で理解してほしいと思っている。そのあとエッセイの構成、イントロダクション、ボディー、コンクルージョンのそれぞれの役割や、Thesis statement,そして Body の中でパラグラフライティングをしていく

必要性だとか、「ライティングってコミュニケーションだよ」っていうことを理解してほしいと思う。

In terms of English writing, being able to do paragraph writing, for example, using topic sentences, supporting sentences, and concluding sentences, is important. It is important to understand the structure of writing. It is also important is to be able to present an original idea and to be able to support the idea with evidence. Japanese students are not used to this kind of structuring or organization of discussion. For example, the concept of topic sentence is introduced to Japanese students for the first time in college. That is why I emphasize topic sentences with my students who are in their first or second year of college. In terms of structures of writing, I want them to think about what each components (such as introduction, body, and conclusion) of an essay *does*. Finally, I want my students to understand that writing is a means of communication. (My translation)

Academic writing as a genre provides a student writer with an infrastructure to explore and extend the discussion of an idea. In other words, academic writing can serve as a framework within which student writers can experiment and learn from writing about their chosen topic. Student writers may only be accustom to the idea of responding to an assignment. However, a genre perspective allows to view academic writing as a vehicle that moves forward the thinking, and in turn an advancement of knowledge in the higher education.

V. Chapter IV

Writing Center Experiences from the Tutor- and Tutee- Perspectives

This chapter offers a descriptive narrative about each student writers and tutors who participated in the interview portion of the study, and makes visible the experiences in and expectations of writing center activities from individuals' perspectives. Out of eleven student writers who participate from John Calvin University, three were male and eight were female students. Out of eight female students, three were international students. As for the tutors, six tutors from John Calvin University and four from Western University participated in the interview. Out of six John Calvin University tutors, two were Japanese writing tutors (one male and one female) and four were English writing tutors (one male and three females). Three of the Western University tutors were male, and one female tutor was also an international student who spoke Japanese as an additional language. All interviews were conducted in the language that the tutor used during conferencing. Each participant is described in the following ways: (a) educational/tutor training background, (b) their beliefs about writing center practices, (c) how they view their relationship with the tutor/tutee, (d) and their beliefs about academic writing. The following information was gathered through some with multiple interviews and others through a single interview. Thus, the length of individual narrative may vary. All names are pseudonym. In keeping with the Japanese tradition of addressing students and teachers with their last name, all Japanese names are family names.

Arakaki

Arakaki is a male, freshman student from Okinawa, the southernmost prefecture in Japan. He studies Business Management. Having grown up in the prefecture with a strong American military presence, he has always been interested in the American culture. (According to the Ministry of Defense report from 2017, Okinawa contains 70.6 percent – or 186,092,000 M^2 – of all Japanese land that is stationed by the US military.) In the future he wishes to work in the United States. That is why he chose to come the John Calvin University which has a strong record of sending its students out to a study abroad in English speaking countries.

At the time of the interview, he was taking the English Core, introduction courses to Business and Economics. In addition to the essays he was assigned in the English class, he was required to write a weekly report in his business class. The weekly report is a summary of lectures, and it is also graded. The accounting class requires its students to turn in lecture notes, which would also be graded at the end of the semester.

In the English class, he was required to complete three writing assignments. The first paper was a description essay about the students' hometown. Second, students were asked to write an essay about an event or a previous experience. The final essay dealt with an abstract idea. The students were asked to express their views about happiness. However the most difficult writing assignment for Arakaki was the business report because as he explained, "there [was] no required format ("書くことが決められてないし")" and the lecture itself, which was done in Japanese, was difficult to follow.

He was always interested in the services that the writing center provides, but always "felt lazy" （"面倒くさい"） about coming in. However, he decided to make an appointment because he wanted to do well on the English final paper which would be weighed heavily in the final grades. He felt apprehensive when the tutor asked to read his paper because he had expected that the tutor would read his paper quietly and make corrections. Additionally, he was surprised when the tutor did not "correct" his writing because he had thought that "there are probably odd sentences" ("文脈とか変だと思った。"）.

The tutor does not assign grades, but Arakaki saw them as teacher because they were "providing instruction"（"教えてくれる"）. He explained that although he did not engage in any writing activities outside of his classes, (He added that he did not enjoy participating in social media and online exchange), he believed that it was important to learn to write because "writing [was] a way of mediation"("書くことは伝えること") and as responsible adults, it was necessary to learn to communicate his thinking.

He felt that there was a gap between the types of writing he practiced in primary school (i.e., *Sakubun* writing) and the kind of writing he was required to do for college entrance examination, which was summary writing both in Japanese and English. However, he did not recall "being taught how to write." Rather writing was something that students were expected to do on their own.

He felt that it was unnecessary to discuss his process of writing with anybody. He preferred writing in his own room and as long as the time permits, he would wrote an entire draft in one sitting. In order for him to write or to think about writing, he had to be at his desk. In other words, in between his writing activities, he would not think about the writing

project he was working on. He felt that the best time to come to the writing center is when a draft is finished. Meeting with a tutor without a draft was a “waste of time” (“時間の無駄”) and “inconsiderate” (“(チューター)に失礼”)for the tutor. Finally, Arakaki described that the writing center as a location that provided its visitors an editing service on a finished product.

Ueda

Ueda is a male, first year, local student. He is in the school of liberal arts and is interested in majoring in psychology. (John Calvin University students declare their majors in their second year.)

As a freshman, he was mainly enrolled in required classes, such as English Core, Christianity, Computer Literacy, and Social Sciences. Additionally, he was enrolled in German. In addition to the English papers (which are similar to what Arakaki described above), he was required to submit a weekly response paper in Japanese for a Christianity class. That particular class also required students to turn in lecture notes which were to be graded.

Although he was motivated to improve, according to Ueda, English was not his strongest subject. He came to the writing center because he wanted some feedback on a speech he was required to prepare in English. The writing center visit was not a requirement, but he found it helpful when the tutor made some specific suggestions which make his speech writing sound more “natural”（”自然な”）. That was why he decided to come back to the center. At the time of the interview, he had been to writing center twice.

He enjoyed coming to the center because it provided opportunities to practice his target language with a native speaker. The university English program hosts English

conversation circles (a lunch time meeting where students can practice English with native speaker instructors). However, he did not feel comfortable mingling with other learners. That was why he prefers coming to the center because he felt safe in a one-on-one setting. Additionally, he felt comfortable interacting with the writing tutors because even though they are instructors themselves, the tutoring sessions did not assign grades.

Yet, he did feel a bit of a "wall" ("壁がある。") between him and the native English speaker tutors. Because he did not always fully understand the tutor (and he felt that the tutor did not understand Japanese), there were possibilities of communication breakdown.

He did not recall spending much time on writing during his primary and secondary school years. The only writing activity that he remembered well was note taking, specifically copying the information a teacher wrote on the blackboard. As for the process of writing, he would sometimes share the content of an essay with his family to see if his arguments made sense to an outsider. Prior to the interview, he believed that the student writers were expected to bring in a complete draft and did not think to come to the writing center at an earlier part of his process of writing. Finally, he added he wished he had "practiced" ("もっと練習しとけばよかった。") writing more before coming to the university because "without writing, learning is not possible." ("書かないと覚えない。")

Inoue

Inoue is a female, first year student. She left in the middle of high school senior year to study ballet in Russia and Germany and spent three years abroad before coming to John Calvin University. She hopes to become a flight attendant in the future, and is planning to study aviation management once she is able to declare major in the second year.

John Calvin University has a special admission for students who had lived abroad. Instead of paper-based examinations, she was admitted based on her performance in her English essay and an interview. She attended a public middle and high schools in Tokyo, but her elementary education was at an international school where she became a user of the English language.

As for teaching of writing prior to university, she recalled taking a computer literacy course in high school, but this class focused mainly on web-based research and students were asked to produce a short summary of their findings. She learned to use Microsoft word processor in that class, but she was excited to learn other applications such as Excel and PowerPoint in college.

She felt a bit overwhelmed by the demands and workload of her college courses. Being able to answer or responds to a question was one thing, but because of John Calvin University's emphasis on the English language, students must express their thinking and ideas in the second language. While she recognized that it may be a "wishful thinking" ("甘え"), she wished that the writing center could also provide a translation service, so that she could solve one problem at a time.

Kan

Kan is an international student who is on a one-year exchange program from Korea. She is a third year, business student. She grew up watching Japanese anime and studied the Japanese language through these television shows for children.

Prior to being an exchange student in Japan, she had studied abroad in the U.S. where she first learned about the writing center, and she was pleased when she found out that John Calvin University offered tutoring services as well. Because of her international

student status, she was in a unique situation where she used both English and Japanese tutoring services. One difference she noticed between the tutors or these languages is that while the Japanese tutors are more willing to collaborate with the student to rewrite sentences so that the expressions become more natural, the English tutors usually focus on grammatical issues and did not "teach" English expressions unless the student specifically asks them. She speculated that it was because these English teachers (aside from the writing center duties, they teach English classes of their own) were used to working with Japanese student writers with relatively low language level. However, as a more-experienced L2 writer in both English and Japanese, she wanted to focus more on improving her fluency rather than accuracy.

Her description of the writing experiences before college was similar to many Japanese examples of preparing for college entrance examinations and having no writing practices. As an international student, however, she was writing in two foreign languages in addition to her native language of Korean. As a more experienced L2 writers in both Japanese and English, she was becoming aware of different genres of writing in various situations, and she hoped that the writing center could provide instructions that could help her navigate through the needs of different rhetorical situations.

Cynthia

Cynthia is a student worker who works at the front desk at the writing support center. Her duties include greeting students and filing session records. She enjoys working at a bilingual center as she grew up speaking English and Japanese at home. (Her father is an American). She recalls that one of the hiring requirements as an ability to communicate in

English, and she applied for the job after coming to the center as a student and hearing about the opening position.

As a multilingual speaker, she had used both English and Japanese sessions. Although she did not necessarily notice any differences in ways the English and Japanese tutors conduct conferencing, she found both sides to be helpful and viewed them as "dependable upperclassmen" ("頼りになる先輩"). She tried not to view the tutors as "teachers"（"先生"）because she does not want to "create a wall" between her and the tutors.

For Cynthia, the difference between classroom teaching and writing conferences was that in class, teachers did not generally provide instruction in writing. Once they turn in a paper, students usually received an edited (by the instructor) version of the paper. At the writing center, Cynthia enjoyed talking with tutors about ways she could improve her writing. However, she was careful about when in a writing process to use the writing center because she did not want her thinking to be influenced by the tutor. She preferred to come to the center once a draft was complete because she felt that, once she started to talk about an idea with a tutor, the idea would no longer be her own. She wanted to have an ownership her own writing, and she did not want the tutors to write papers for her. For Cynthia, writing center tutors were language experts who could help her with expressions and complicated grammar structures.

Kei

Kei is a second year student. As an English language major whose long-term goal is to study abroad in the US, she has taken several English writing classes which are also taught in English. She belongs in a special program; In order to enter this program which is

designed specifically to prepare students for studying abroad, she had to take an additional test and a phone interview after she was admitted to the university. The purpose of this program is to get students up to speed with the writing needs of American universities and colleges.

Writing an extended prose (let alone in English) was not always easy for Kei. However, after having some practice, she came to prefer writing essay to taking paper-based tests. She felt that in writing, once she understood the genre she was working with, she could work within a certain parameter. In contrary, test taking was difficult because as a student, she could not always provide the exact answer that the instructor was seeking. For Kei, writing provided a flexible means to demonstrate her ability as a student.

Sarnai

Sarnai is a fourth year, international student from Mongolia, and she also works as a receptionist at the writing center. She had come to John Calvin University as a freshman, and as a junior, she studied abroad in the US. As a student writer, she primarily used the writing center for a Japanese language support. She did not particularly remember receiving explicit instruction in writing in Mongolia prior to her university education. In fact, she learned to write academic papers in the Japanese language classes. One difference she pointed out between writing instruction in the classroom and the writing center was that during conferences, tutors asked her questions that made her think about what she wrote. Instead of telling what was wrong or obscure about particular sentences, the tutors pointed out the areas, so that Sarnai can solve problems on her own or with the tutor's support (if necessary). On the contrary, many of her classes had 200+ students enrolled, and instructors did not provide comments or grades for individual assignments expect for the final grade

after the semester was over. Without the support she received from the writing center, Sarnai felt that her Japanese would have not improved as much as it did. She expressed her disappointment that not too many international students knew about the writing center. She hoped to become a bridge between the writing center and the international student community.

Naito

Naito is a first year student. As a student who is preparing for study abroad, she attends many English themed activities. She had interacted with the English tutors outside of the writing center, but she felt that she had to negotiate her relationship with the tutor when she first came to a conference session for the first time because on contrary to other student examples, she felt a bit of distance caused by the formality of the writing center setting. However, by the end of the session, she felt relaxed and was able to discover some problems that needed to be solved with the help of the tutor.

Although she did not recall doing too much writing in high school, she received some writing instruction in a college preparatory cram school that she attended before coming to John Calvin University. There, she was taught to read the first sentence and last sentences of a paragraph, but she did not know why that was important. After having written some papers in college, she came to know that those were the places where the main ideas were, and she wondered why "[they] didn't they teach [her]?" ("どうして教えてくれなかったんだろう？") Naito felt that it would have been beneficial to learning those expectations of academic writing prior to coming to college. Through her practice in writing, however, she was becoming increasingly aware of the strategies and features that academic writers adopt to make their writing more communicative and clearer.

Shiraishi

Shiraishi is a first year student. He had attended John Calvin University system as a junior high and high school students. Rather than using the escalator admission system (which gives automatic admission to most students who attend the junior and high schools there), he took an examination to be admitted to the university program because it had been five years since he had graduated from John Calvin High School.

Shiraishi felt that English had always been his strong subject since as a junior and high school student in the John Calvin School System, he had extensively studied the foreign language. (John Calvin School System as a whole emphasizes English education.) However, the English education in junior and high school levels focused mainly on oral skills, and writing was not necessarily a large part of the language curriculum.

The difference between classroom teaching of writing and the writing center is that for the classroom setting, once a draft is turned in and returned by the instructor, he will not revise the paper. On the other hand, the writing center provides an opportunity to see the draft through a reader's perspective (i.e., the tutor). Shiraish explained that he tried to make an appointment with a tutor as soon as a draft was finished because if he waited too long, the draft was going to be "spoiled" ("腐る"). He enjoyed having a conversation about his writing while the draft was "fresh in [his] mind," ("新しいうちに") so that he can revise the document more "efficiently" ("効率よく(できる)").

He found a gap between academic writing and the type of writing he was used to as a Japanese reader. While a convention of academic writing expects the writer to state a main idea up front, he felt that a type of rhetorical strategy that was preferred by many Japanese readers called for descriptive writing that revealed a main point at the end. In a way, the

Japanese approach to writing is a heuristic rather than a statement of an idea. For Shiraishi who enjoyed using writing as a way to get idea, academic writing was a challenge because he felt it was somewhat restrictive. However, he was becoming increasingly aware of such convention through discussion of writing in an academic setting with the writing center tutors.

Kasamsun

Kasamsun is a second year, international student from Thai. She came to Japan as a high school students and has been in Japan for five years. Her mother had lived in Japan about twenty years ago, and she wishes work for a Japanese company and to live in Japan with her mother in the future. Because of her international background, she is interested in studying

Since the writing center opened, she had received Japanese writing support on a weekly basis. She had completed a series of Japanese language classes and at the time of the interview, was taking course among Japanese speakers. Although she did not feel particularly challenged in conversational Japanese, academic Japanese writing was difficult because of its organization and technical jargons she might be required to use. She would come to the writing center as soon as she receives an assignment. This helped her understand the requirements and make plans for meeting those requirements. For Kasaumsan, writing tutors were more than someone she could talk to about her writing assignments. As an international student studying among native-Japanese students, she often felt shy and found it difficult to speak to her classmates. She was often alone on campus, however, when she came to the writing center, she felt a sense of belonging. She truly appreciated the support that the writing center provided, and she called the Japanese tutors

her “mothers (or father)” (“お母さん”) whom she could talk to about school work and her career goals.

Wakamiya

Wakamiya is a forth-year student. She majors in English Language and British and American Literature. She is a fluent speaker of English; She won a school-wide English speech contest the previous year. She had come to the writing center to get help with her speech script to prepare for the competition. As a senior, she uses the writing center to work on her senior thesis.

Senior theses are not part of graduation requirements at John Calvin University, but students may choose to engage in an independent research project under a supervision of an academic advisor. Wakamiya remembers having shown her father’s senior thesis during her elementary school years, and she had been motivated to write her own since she was a young girl. She was also encouraged to write a senior thesis by her mother who did not write her own, but always regretted not having done so. With both of her parents’ backing, Wakamiya decided to engage in a research project and to write a senior thesis. Writing a senior thesis, for her, was her way of showing her appreciation to her parents who has paid her tuition throughout her academic career.

She studied abroad in Australia during her first year as a John Calvin University student. There, she was introduced to the genre of academic writing which was taught as a form consisting an introduction, body, and a conclusion. She explains that having studied writing in a specialized course in Australia has helped her write throughout her college career. The biggest takeaway for her was that as a writer, you do not need to use

complicated grammar, but what is important is communication. In her draft writing, she enjoys pouring her ideas onto the paper (or rather, typing up in her laptop) rather than spending hours trying to complete a perfect draft (which she had done in the past).

She comes to the writing center for grammar support. She enjoys working with native-speaker tutors who can lend her another pair of eyes to catch grammatical mistakes and who can sometimes offer her alternative ways of conveying ideas. English had always been her strong subject, but winning the speech competition and scoring high marks on standardized testing (such as IELTS) that measures writing abilities have given her confidence. That sense of confidence, she explains, helped her view writing as a "fun" activity. She enjoys coming to the writing center where she can get advice on how to become effective communicator through conversations about writing.

Student Writers at John Calvin University

Name (Gender)	Year in College	Nationality	Language of instruction	Target-Language Level	Expectations for the center – Center should/Writing tutors are:
Arakaki (M)	First-Year	Japanese	English	Low-Intermediate	• Provide instruction
Ueda (M)	First-Year	Japanese	English	Low-Intermediate	• Teach "Natural" English
Inoue (F)	First-Year, *Kikoku -shijyo*	Japanese	English	Intermediate	• Provide translation service
Kan (F)	Third-Year, Exchange student	Korean	English/ Japanese	Fluent	• Provide instruction to help navigate needs of different rhetorical situation

Cynthia (F)	Third-Year, Front desk attendant	Japanese (American Father)	English /Japanese	Fluent	• Teach expressions and grammar structure • "dependable upperclassmen"
Kei (F)	Second-Year, Front desk attendant	Japanese	English	Intermediate	• Provide opportunity to practice English
Sarnai (F)	Fourth-Year, International student	Mongolian	Japanese	Fluent	• Provide personalized instruction
Naito (F)	First-Year	Japanese	English	Intermediate	• Provide opportunity to practice writing skills
Shiraishi (M)	First-Year, Previously attended the John Calvin School System (middle – high school)	Japanese	English	Intermediate	• Offer conversations about writing, • Provide different perspectives
Kasamsum (F)	Second-Year, International student	Thai	Japanese	Fluent	• "Mother"
Wakamiya (F)	Fourth-Year, Senior Thesis	Japanese	English	Fluent	• Provide grammar support

The interviews revealed that student writers come to the writing centers for various reasons and at different time in their academic careers. Some student visit the writing center for the first time because they are recommended to do so by their first-year English instructors. These visits are sometime rewarded with extra points by the instructors. Thus, they may be extrinsically motivated. Other student go to the writing center because they are intrinsically motivated to improve their writing. Writing center visits are not required by their instructors, but those students want to use them as resources or additional opportunities to practice their target language. For example, one student mentioned that in their daily as well as school lives, there were hardly any settings to practice English with native speakers outside of English classrooms. Students can come to the writing center not only to get writing support, but also to interact with native speakers of their target language.

Writing centers do not only provide language support, but they also offer a safe and nurturing learning environment. For example, for international students who may at times feels isolated in the classroom setting, the writing center can offer a personalized instruction through conversations about writing. Although it may be restricted within the boundary of writing center walls, these international students could develop personal relationship with tutors with whom they have small talk and get to know as a person, rather than a student in a classroom. In this setting, an international student may no longer feel alone which may help improve his or her motivation to learn.

Tutors at John Calvin University

Ota – A Male Japanese Tutor

Ota had been a tutor for a year and a half. He had understood, before being a tutor, that the writing center was not a place to provide editing services, but he imagined that

perhaps the tutor demonstrated by writing sentences for the tutee. After participating in an annual Japan Writing Centers Association symposium during his first semester of tutoring, he learned that tutoring sessions was much more than a language service. An effective tutor respects tutees' opinions and feelings, and the tutor gets the tutees to write by asking questions. The tutor does not provide sentences, for example, but the tutee is the one doing a lot of writing activity during a writing conference.

There is no written procedure as to how to carry on a conference, but the main goal is to help student writers become independent. When students can write independently, they are able to compose sentences and check the sentences for correctness on their own. Tutors can write for the tutee if necessary, but in general, tutors solicit the tutees to write or aid them to compose on their own. Through his training and participation as an attendee and a presenter in workshops, he came to understand that the tutor's role is to provide support, and he is not the main actor in a session. His role as a tutor is not someone who teaches or provide instruction, but in his view, a writing tutor is someone who "thinks with tutees"（"一緒に考える"）. A tutor would first listen to the tutee about what s/he wants to do during a session and the kinds of information s/he wants to include in an assignment. The tutor, then, asks questions and gives suggestions from a native speaker's perspective. Further, student writers come to the writing center with an "order"（"オーダー"）from their instructor. This order includes themes or issues, types of writing, and requirements for the assignment. The tutor's job is to understand (and help the tutee understand) the purpose of this "order (what is this particular assignment trying to get at)" and how to assist the student writer in incorporating their opinions about the given issue while satisfying the requirements. The person who makes decisions at the end, however, is the tutee him/herself.

There are different types of students. Some students ask the tutors to provide model sentences and are happy to follow instructions. Other students want to state their opinions and ideas in a particular structure while using "natural" （"自然な"） Japanese. However, the biggest challenge for Ota is to meet every tutee's needs in a thirty-minute session. Taking the due date and the tutee's goals for the session into consideration, he makes adjustment to each session, so that he can provide the most amount of support possible. To Ota, no two sessions are the same. He tries to tailor to the needs of individual tutees and is always thinking about how to be an effective tutor.

Although he is friendly with English tutors, Japanese and English tutors do not necessarily work together in terms of training and daily operation of the writing center. However, Ota hopes that there would be more interactions between the two groups. He explains, "Because the idea of tutoring originally came from English education, I think native English tutors have better ideas about how to discuss grammatical issues and expressions and how to assist students in writing their own sentences. I would like to ask them about those strategies" (my translation). He continues:

> 英語圏で育った人は) たぶん小さいころから、小学校ぐらいからみんなと論理的に話すとか、論理的に発表、自分の意見をみんなに伝えるためにどうするかっていう訓練はたぶん英語圏の方のほうが積んでいるんじゃないかと。後自分の話す内容がちゃんと皆に伝わるように理路整然としているかっていう、そういう訓練はたぶん積んでいると思うので、日本人は感覚的なところに傾きがちなところが多分あると思いますので、これは見習うべきものが多いんじゃないかと思います

> I think the people who grow up in the English speaking countries are taught to speak and write logically from early ages. I think they receive training in how to present and ways to communicate ideas clearly, so that they can be understood by their audience. On the other hand, the Japanese people tend to focus on feelings and emotions. I think we can learn a lot from English speakers about how to be a better communicator.

Nevertheless, he exchanges ideas with his fellow Japanese tutors on a daily basis.

He and his Japanese colleagues are always thinking about ways to improve services. One idea was to get in touch with classroom instructors to understand course objectives and goals. While it is not a bad idea, the Japanese tutors came to a conclusion that writing tutors are not teaching assistants who provide student support about a particular subject. To them, the writing center is a place where student writers come to receive help on their own terms and their job is to provide support in the area where individual students need help the most. Thus, tutoring must be student directed and the tutors must listen to how the tutee describes an assignment and what the tutee hopes to accomplish.

He teaches foreign language writing, but he believes learning to write in any language can help students become better communicator in their native language and beyond. In no matter what language, an act of writing gives an opportunity to organize and reflect on one's ideas, and the process of writing helps the writer become aware of his/her audience. Through writing, students can truly absorb what they study in college. Thus, writing is an effective way of learning.

Not all students can express their concerns, and some tutees might feel embarrassed to read their writing out loud. Ota tries to be sensitive to each student writer's needs and to

create a relaxing atmosphere, so that both the tutee and the tutor can enjoy a session. He and his fellow Japanese tutors work as a team by reporting to each other the students' struggles and progress (through google doc), so that they can make a positive impact on helping student become independent writers.

Ono – A Female Japanese Tutor

Ono is one of the original Japanese tutors since the center opened in 2014. She was invited to apply for the tutoring position during her first year of her study towards a master's degree in teaching Japanese, and she began working as a tutor during her second year. Japanese tutors are either a graduate or a student working towards the MA degree in teaching Japanese at John Calvin University.

Japanese tutors work closely in a team environment. They get together outside of the center before and after each semester to discuss difficult sessions they've had and give each other suggestions. On a daily basis, Japanese tutors write a short reflection after each session on a google doc, which is shared among all the Japanese tutors as well as the supervisors. These reflections include the name of student writers whom they met; a short description of the writing assignment; types of issues the student writers were having; and what was done during the session. This file helps the tutors be on a same page. If a student writers comes back to receive help from a different tutor on the same project that he or she worked with another tutor, they can pick up work form the spot where it was left off.

She follows a certain set of procedures in each session. She begins each session by asking, "What do you want to do today?" She then asks the tutee to read the entire paper out loud. While the student reads, she tries to get the gist of the paper and looks for areas that are unclear. While most student writers ask to "check" the paper, she tries to encourage

student to notice issues on their own by asking questions about the text. At the end of a session, she asks the tutee whether or not his or her concerns were addressed. However, she feels that it is difficult to give full attention to all of the student's concerns because of the factors such as limited length of a tutoring session and the closeness of the paper's due date.

What she values the most in her tutoring is building a relationship with each tutee. Ono sees her role as a "Japanese volunteer" （"日本語ボランティア"） who helps students with language learning related issues with a special focus on writing. She calls it volunteering, because as a teacher, she would have to give scores to students in her class, but no scores are given at the writing center. Here at the center, students can talk to tutors about many things and the tutors can give advice. Further, students can come any time and when they come, they can always get help. In her tutoring, she wants to maintain a casual atmosphere where students can say "I don't know" or "I don't understand" without hesitation. Besides building relationship through personable interactions, she aims to help student writers become independent. She views her job is to assist student writers, so that after conferencing, they can continue making progress on their own. She focuses on particular issues in each session, so that her tutees can understand the kind of problems that need to be addressed and what has to get done next.

As a teacher of the Japanese language, she has worked with both Japanese native speaker students and students of foreign origins, and she has found that many college-aged, student writers from Japan and especially from other Asian countries have a difficulty transitioning to academic writing. She explains that most students have had some experience with writing up until high school, however, their writing activities tend to focus on writing about a particular event or responding to a book. Thus, students are not used to identifying

critical issues or rejecting ideas. Many Japanese students, in particular, can accept and agree with ideas in writing, but they cannot explain why an idea is good. Because students have not had enough opportunities and practices to think critically about an issue in writing, they are not use to thinking, and she feels that in order to write academically, students must be able to reflect deeply about critical issues. Further in academic writing, a writer must make clear his or her intentions from the beginning and stick with the idea throughout a piece of writing. “You do not have a high level of language ability,” Ono continues, “but you have to be able to communicate your ideas clearly to the reader（“日本語が上手じゃなくてもいい、でも言いたいことを伝えられなきゃいけない。）.

Ono believes that whether you are writing or speaking, you need to be able to construct your argument, thus, brainstorming is important. Conferencing can afford tutors and tutees to build relationships, so that the tutor can help the tutee during the process of composing ideas.

Another skill that she feels many student writers as lacking is the ability to read. She feels that whether or not a student can write successful academic paper depends on his or her level of reading ability. She explains that vocabulary and an understanding of grammar is important, but what is more critical is to be able to get ideas, and she feels that the more you read, the more ideas you can get.

She compares her job as a tutor with her other position as a business Japanese writing teacher. As a business writing teacher, she uses red ink to mark student writing. There, she does not necessarily correct mistakes, but the idea is that students are expected to make changes accordingly. At the writing center on the other hand, she focuses on helping

student writers becoming aware of their process of writing, so that when they leave the center, they can carry on the writing activity on their own.

The writing center does not provide editing services. Instead, she wants student writers to view the center as a place where they can get individualized help. Because it may take time for students to understand their writing processes and the problematic areas that they need to work on, wait time (the time to let the tutee process information) is necessary. For this reason, she questions whether or not a thirty-minute timeframe is the most effective length for a session. In reality, many tutees end up asking to extend a session to a forty-five to sixty minute session when the next slot is open (and often times the center can accommodate that because they are not always fully booked). Nevertheless, the amount of work she and the tutee can achieve in a given time is limited, and sometimes she might have to tell the students, "Do x, y, and z before turning in the paper". The biggest challenge for her is to provide enough guidance to student writers while keeping learner autonomy.

Nick – A Male English Tutor

Nick studied Japanese as an undergraduate, and he was invited to apply for a teacher exchange program between his university and John Calvin University, which was in a developing phase during his senior year. He then enrolled in a M.A. TESOL program at his university in preparation for teaching at John Calvin University. He was the first exchange teacher from his university to be sent to John Calvin University in 2012, and he completed his master's degree as a distance student after he came to Japan.

Nick was one of the original member of the writing center at John Calvin University. He began tutoring without training because of a scheduling conflict, but he was one of the members who attended a day-long workshop hosted by the oldest university writing center

in Japan (see Cassy for more information about the workshop). There, he "picked up some techniques" and has tried in his own tutoring.

He feels that the most effective techniques is when he has student writers read their texts aloud and help them notice their own grammar or spelling mistakes. He describes that student writers would say a sentence correctly even though it is written incorrectly on a piece of paper. He explains that, "…even though there may be mistakes on the paper, what they wrote came from their head, so what they say at the time, they say it correctly or they catch it. Sometimes they don't catch it but they hear it". His job here is to stop them then and help them notice. He calls this practice "guided proofreading," and explains that the goal is "for students to not be dependent on [tutors]". Unfortunately, however, he feels that this strategy only works with higher-level students.

Nick explains that working with a lower-level student is bit more of a challenge. One reason is that many lower-level students want writing tutors to "fix [their] grammar," but because he is not their teacher, he "[doesn't] know what the teacher is going to be looking for. For content, mechanic, grammar, or what." He does not want to "overstep [his] boundary into what the teacher is supposed to be doing in terms of fixing their grammar". Another reason why working with lower-level student is difficult is because of a communication issue. When asked about a confusing sentence, lower-level students can explain their ideas in Japanese, but unless a tutor is fluent in the student's first language, the communication would break down. Neal feels that it would be beneficial to student writers if they had an option of receiving tutoring on English writing in Japanese.

Although there is no strict language policy, he conducts most of sessions in English. However, when he feels that a tutee cannot fully explain ideas in English, he asks he or she

to say it in Japanese. He does not necessarily speak Japanese during sessions himself, but he uses his Japanese language knowledge to let students know that he understands them. Other language related issue has to do with translation. Many student writers tries to translate a Japanese sentence into English using a dictionary themselves. He explains that, ".. a lot of times if they try to translate on their own, it wouldn't really work because the Japanese word have a completely different context or different nuance as a native English speaker". In those instances, he would explain to the student writer, "If you use this word, it would sound like this, but what you really mean is I think this." He sees his role as a native speaker "guide" who makes suggestions.

In addition to seeing himself as a guide, he describes writing conferencing as "coaching". As a tutor, he has met with different kinds of students. He has met with students who would tell him they wanted a B grade. On the other hand, other students are motivated writers who are "driven to improve their own writing." He is not sure what motivates that drive, but one thing that is common among those students is that they are analytical of their own writing. They would say, "I wrote this, but I don't feel very good about this," and he would tell them, "It really isn't that bad." Many of those students want to improve their TEFL or ILETS scores. They would bring with them a TESL or ILETS practice book and ask questions about form and argument in writing. Neal found that after repeating a session a few times, those students stop coming because they may "get busy," he thinks, or they "figure out how to work [on their own]," in which case he feels (and hopes) that he was able to help them become independent writers.

In his teaching of English, he emphasizes on communication and believes that "grammar mistakes don't matter if your message has been successfully transmitted".

However, he continues, “writing is a little bit different because on one hand… [a grammar mistake] doesn’t particularly matter, but error doesn’t not interfere with comprehension”. He would not bother changing the text if the grammar mistake does not interfere with comprehension, but he would let student writers notice the mistake if the mistake is problematic. Further, he wants to be careful about not stepping over his boundaries. He wonders

> What exactly [is] the teacher...looking for teaching? If you get an essay, you look at it, but you have to wonder what kind of skills the teacher focusing on this time. Is the teacher trying to help the students work on a specific portion of the writing process? Does the student understand the process or am I supposed to help them understand the process, or do they just want to check to make sure if it’s comprehensible. So sometimes a challenging issue to try to figure out what exactly the student want, what is the teacher looking for and what can I do about it?

He explains that “balancing” to meet the needs of student writers and their teachers is “the most challenging part about the writing center”.

Catherine – A Female English Tutor

Catherine began working as a writing tutor when she came to John Calvin University as a teaching fellow. Her other responsibilities, other than teaching an English Core class, includes organizing and running conversation circles at lunch times and the bilingual English GLEE club where students do a play in English and Japanese. She grew up in the suburban, state of New York and became interested in Japanese pop culture as a teen. She came to Japan as a high school exchange student. She learned about the teaching fellows program during her freshman year at John Calvin College and had always wanted to become

a fellow upon her graduation. She is immersed in the fellows program community. She had been in contact with previous fellows and had heard about the tutoring responsibility at John Calvin University from her predecessors.

She and Annette (another tutor) received a one-day training from the center director upon their arrival and prior to begin working as a tutor at the writing center. The training included going over worksheets, which stressed that the tutors should encourage students and help them find mistakes on their own, and practice sessions, in which the trainees took turns pretending to be a tutor and a tutee using actual student writing samples. The biggest take away from this lesion was that the tutors are there to help, not to correct writing for the student writers.

Catherine and a few other tutors also had an opportunity to visit another writing center for additional training. This workshop took place at the oldest, most respected writing center (for its history and size) in Japan. At this workshop, John Calvin University writing center tutors had opportunities to observe sessions by experienced tutors, listen to presentations about tutoring strategies, and ask questions. She has not had any organized training sessions since then, but she talks with her colleagues on a daily basis about issues related to tutoring.

One issue which comes up often is how to get quiet, Japanese student writers to speak during a session. She tries to wait for a tutee to respond to her questions as long as she can see that the students is thinking or understanding the prompt. However, in order to get students, especially lower-level English students, to communicate with her, Catherine sometimes uses Japanese when she does not get any response from them. Going back and forth between English and Japanese is a tricky issue. Although there is no strict English-only

language policy, many English Core instructors strongly suggest students to only speak English during class. Catherine feels more flexible about using Japanese in the writing center, however, she worries that she is "helping [the students] too much" when she uses Japanese. Nevertheless, she uses other strategies to engage student writers in a tutoring session.

Asking questions is a strategy she uses to get the conversation going. She begins each session by gathering a bit of information about the student writer and the assignment. She would ask whether or not the student has used the writing center before; what the assignment is; and what class the assignment is for. She then asks, "What do you want to improve today?" Sometimes students do not know what the word 'improve' means. In that case she asks, 'What do you want to make better?" or "What do you want to fix?" Many student writers, especially lower-level students, asks her to "fix grammar," but Catherine reminds them her job is to "help" them "make [their writing] better".

To Catherine, teaching in front of the classroom and tutoring at the writing center "feels different," but she uses her classroom teacher-knowledge to help student writers become more independent. In her sessions, she incorporates mini-lessons during tutoring sessions to reinforce grammar points. For example, she would point out a subject-and-verb agreement mistake and reintroduces the meta-language, so that the student can remember and learn from the kinds of mistakes they make in their own writing. Further, if a student writer is struggling with grappling a certain grammar point, she also shows empathy by sharing that many students make the same kind of mistakes.

Catherine tries make her sessions student-centered by incorporating student reflection in her session. She considers a session is successful if the student can tell her what

they worked on during the session and what he or she is going to do next after leaving the writing center. She also "let [student writers] speak in Japanese" if they are struggling with English. She sees her role to be a "supporter" who is "almost a friend" because the atmosphere is "more casual (than the classroom)" in the writing center.

When asked about characteristic of Japanese student writers (if any), Catherine answered as follows. "I can't speak for everybody," she warned, but "most students are not used to thinking critically". She feels that many Japanese student writers are used to "just accepting the information [given in the classroom,]…regurgitating [the topics and ideas that a teacher gives in a classroom] in a paper test, but not really producing original writing". She wants her students to know that in college, "teachers are not going to give you all the answers, so they have to think about how to [form opinions]". She admits that "it is hard" to teach critical thinking, but she tries to do it "by continuously asking, who, what, where, when, why questions" because students in her classroom "just answer the basic questions in their essay," but she pushes them further by having them provide explanations in their writing.

For Catherine, learning to write (in no matter what language) is a necessary skill that "you must be able to pick up in a university [because] you are spending so much money and years in academic higher institution, and because writing is a very important way of communication". She is aware that not every student is going to study abroad, but "people from other countries are coming into Japan, and they are going to enter the work force eventually and they might need to use English. As a teacher and a tutor of English writing, she wants to help Japanese student writers become independent writers by providing opportunity to practice stating their opinions and improving their writing. Finally, she has

enjoyed working at the writing center "because people who come here mostly sign up for themselves… [She has] enjoyed meeting those kind of students who want to try working harder outside of their class and improve their writing". Catherine is motivated by those proactive students feels a great deal of satisfaction working on a one-on-one basis with individual student writers at the writing center.

Mary – A Female English Tutor

Mary, along with Annette and Catherine, came to John Calvin University as a China Province (pseudonym) fellow. The China Province program has over one hundred years of history. It began as a missionary program between John Calvin College and a province in China, however, its religious aspect has "fallen to the wayside," and it is now "about cultural exchange and teaching English, broadening ourselves in the horizons" (Mary). The program is hosted by a few locations throughout Asia, and John Calvin University is one of the oldest institution to host exchange teachers.

The application pool for the fellowship program is open to graduates of John Calvin College who completed a program within the past three years. The application is submitted during the last semester before graduation, and it involves essay writing and interviews. Once accepted, the fellows receive a training in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) over the winter semester and receive a one-month long language training after they arrive at their site before they start teaching. Although it was not required, Mary completed an additional English-teaching training through the university's summer session prior to leaving for Japan.

Mary assumed the role of a writing center tutor as she was expected as a teaching fellow and received a one-on-one tutoring training from the center director before she began

conferencing. Mary was familiar with the idea of tutoring because she visited the writing center as a student while she was at John Calvin College. The training coupled with her own experience of using the writing center as a student writer provided some ideas for her to begin working as a tutor.

As a tutor, Mary tries to get into the "language learner mentality" when she works with Japanese student writers who are learning to write in English. As a learner of Japanese language herself, she understands the difficulty of writing in a second language. Rather than seeing herself as a teacher or a mentor, for example, she sees herself as a reader who "happen[s] to know English". She "understand that English is hard because [learning] Japanese is hard [for her]."

Her sensitivity to the Japanese language helped her notice the tendency that many student writers "write completely differently than when they speak [in English]." She explains:

> I don't know how [academic] papers are written in Japan. I've read other things, newspapers and things. There is a lot of inference. There is no clear explanations of "this is happening." I also notice that the subject would be gone, so I as an English speaker, I would not be able to follow what's going on. Instead of like, "Tommy and Bob went to the store and Tommy bought Popsicle and Billy bought soda." It would be like, "Tommy and Bob went to the store. Bought Popsicle and bought soda." So, I feel like there is a lot of things missing it's because they assume that you already know what they are talking about. That's fine in Japanese, everybody is on the same page, but as soon as you open the door to other people, like in English or if you write in a Japanese paper that you want read by non-natives or people from

other universities, you need to write as if they don't know what you are talking about.

Many student writers would be able to explain what they mean verbally in English, but they do not provide enough details when they write. She found that many students "rely on one word to encompass everything". Mary suspects that Japanese student writers construct English sentences in the same way they speak or write in Japanese, in which ideas are often implied rather than made explicit.

To Mary, a successful tutoring session "depends on the level." She starts each session by asking students to read their papers out loud. By doing this, she hopes that student writers would be able to "catch their own mistakes." A session is successful if she can "have a conversation" about their writing with higher-level students. As for a lower-level student, "just [having] them speaking [in English]" is a success. Many student writers come to the writing center expecting the tutors to do the job for them. When Ariel asks tutees to read their paper, she often gets a blank stare back from the students as if they are saying, "Aren't you going to read it?" (Mary). At first, this type of silence made her uncomfortable, but she can now "sit there and wait" for student writers to participate in tutoring activities.

Another tendency that Mary has noticed about Japanese student writers is that if they were given a word count, they would only write the exact number of words they were asked for. As an English writing teacher and a writing tutor, she encourages her student writers to "write a lot, so that they can cut a lot, so when I go and check your work when you come to the writing center, we can cut enough and shape it so that it's a good essay, but also meets the requirements." The most challenging situation, however, is when she finds that a student

writer has translated the entire essay using a software such as google translate. She feels that she cannot just tell them, “I can’t look at this.” Instead, she feels that her job as a writing tutor, someone who reads a student writer’s text, is to help build confidence. She wants student writers to know that their paper would be much better if they wrote it even if they are not confident about their English.

She exchanges ideas and talks with other English writing tutors on a daily basis, but her reflection of her own experience of using the writing center as a student has helped her become a better tutor.

> I remember when I would go to writing centers and they would ask, “What does this mean? Why don’t you just say that?” Tutor would be like, “You obviously know the topic, so don’t worry about it too much. Just write it.” So, I think it’s our job to tell the students, “You obviously know what you are writing about.”

Just as writing tutors at John Calvin College helped Ariel become a confident writer, she hopes to assist her tutors in becoming better writers of English.

Annette – A Female English Tutor

Annette graduated from John Calvin College and became a teaching fellow. Teaching fellows at John Calvin University are assigned to teach an English Core class, a requirement for all incoming freshmen, each semester, and their additional responsibilities include organizing English conversation clubs and working at the writing center. Because she teaches the English class that most users of the writing center are enrolled at the time of their visit, she finds it tricky to define her role as a tutor. She explains that sometimes she feels more like a teacher especially when she is working with a lower-level English

language student writers. But ideally, she would like to think of her relationship with student writers as a "symbiotic" one, as she explains that:

> there is a lot of back and forth in a way that I don't feel in my classroom where I definitely feel like a teacher-teacher. Here, those boundaries can be broken down, and I can ask t hem a question and they can ask me a question, and there is definitely a back and forth.

Nevertheless, her relationship with student writers as a tutor is "not equal," but she "sometimes feel like a peer, almost."

She joined the center during its second semester of operation. Since then, she feels that the center in terms of its size and the number of users have grown. She also feels that the "atmosphere" of the center as a bilingual institution has changed. In the beginning, she felt that the English and the Japanese tutoring sides were separate entities, but after Kai's arrival, it began to feel like one center. She alludes this change to the way registration is handled. While there used to be a separate sign in procedures for users of English tutoring and the users of Japanese tutoring, receptionists now handles registration for tutoring in both languages. This made a big difference in the way Anabel sees the center. Because she "see[s] the receptionist interacting with the both sides, … it just feels like it's more like a language center, not an English center because [she is] hearing Japanese, too". Nevertheless, there is not much interaction between the English and Japanese tutors, but she hopes to exchange tutoring ideas with Japanese tutors as she continues to work as a writing tutor.

Because of her Japanese racial background (her father is Japanese) and familiarity with the Japanese background, she is conscious about the hierarchy that exists within a Japanese official setting. While she usually feels at ease working in the English department

(because many of her colleagues are of western origin), she gets nervous about reporting to the Japanese administrators and school officials. When speaking in Japanese with her superiors, she chooses her words carefully and switches her speaking style to a formal one. She is also conscious about her body language, such as bowing. She had to learn these etiquette on the job. Because the fellowship program sends English teachers to few parts of Asia, there was no Japan focused training. She, along with other fellows, was told that each fellow would be working in "a professional" setting and to "be warned about that." Although her heritage has helped her assimilate into a Japanese workplace, there were other challenges she faced as a young professional.

To Annette, presenting herself as a professional person was the biggest challenge in the beginning. While she had just graduated from college with a minimum training in language teaching, most of her colleagues at John Calvin University had at least ten years of teaching experience, and it was difficult for her to "connect" with them because they were "different place in life with families". Additionally, because of her youthful appearance, she felt that she needed to dress in certain ways to "look older," so she could earn respect from her colleagues and students. As for working in the writing center, she felt, at first, "inadequate" compare to her Japanese counterpart because all of the Japanese tutors were older, graduate students with experiences. Yet, she gained confidence as she started tutoring.

She received a day-long training on conferencing prior to start working as a writing center tutor. Although the director (whom she received training from) has been helpful in answering questions and providing support, she feels that she learned to tutor on the job. She also often exchanges ideas with her co-fellows who she shares an office with, and as she

continued to gain experiences and discuss tutoring issues with her colleagues, she started to form a clear idea about the writing center mission.

In her sessions, she is focused on giving students "tools to edit their writing on their own." Almost all students ask her to "fix grammar," but she reminds those students by telling that, "The writing center is not for grammar." In fact, she feels that students are surprised when they are asked to 'do things' during a session. Annette askes students to read their writing out loud during a session because she feels that students will be able to find their own mistakes no matter what their language levels are. She has also gotten more comfortable with silence. In the beginning, if a student writer did not respond to a question, she felt she needed to say something or offer answers. She can now ask the same question in different ways and have found ways to communicate with lower-level English-language student writers by showing how a thought can be explained in a simple English sentence.

As she continued working as an English teacher, she felt that she began to understand Japanese student writers. She feels that many Japanese student writers want to be "correct" and the "content doesn't matter" to them. She had expected that the students would have had lots of experiences with writing in high school, but she realized it was not the case. She felt a "disconnect" when her students could not respond to the prompt, "Would you rather go on vacation during summer or winter?" Students kept repeating, "I don't know" or "I've never traveled during winter/summer." This was when she realized it was difficult for her students to think critically about and/or imagine a situation and state their opinions on it. Annette feels that the Japanese student writers do not get taught to express themselves in writing, and they tend to write "in a controlled way." In order to write academically, she wants her students to "let go of [the feeling that] academic writing has a structure." She

admits that “it sounds counterproductive,” but she had found that her students would “fill in their own versions of words” when given sample essays. Since then, she stopped giving examples in a hope that they will “let go of feeling like there is a rule.” To Annette, an academic writer writes with an intentionality and is to be able to get “to the point” using a “simple” language, and she hopes to convey this message through her teaching in the classroom and tutoring at the writing center.

Tutors at John Calvin University

	Nationality	Language of Instruction	Training	Role of Tutor (Interviewee’s Perspective)
Ota (M)	Japanese	Japanese	Master’s degree in Teaching Japanese	“think[ing] with tutees”（”一緒に考える”）
Ono (F)	Japanese	Japanese	Master’s degree in Teaching Japanese	“Japanese volunteer”（“日本語ボランティア”
Nick (M)	American	English	MA TESOL	Provide “guided proofreading”
Catherine (F)	American	English	BA	Asking questions
Mary (F)	American	English	BA, TESOL certificate	Important to have “language learner mentality” to help tutees
Annette (F)	American	English	BA	“symbiotic” tutor-tutee relationship

A comparison between the perspectives of Japanese tutors and English tutors revealed interesting findings. Both Japanese tutors viewed writing conferencing as an opportunity to work together with student writers. Ota descried his job as a co-thinker, and Ono explained her role as a language supporter who helps student writers materialize their thinking in the written form of their target language. English tutors, on the other hand,

viewed tutoring sessions as opportunities to provide individualized instruction through asking questions and modeling effective proofreading strategies. These different attitude may result from the tutors' previous experiences with writing centers. Japanese tutors who were unfamiliar with the idea of writing centers prior to working as a tutor, may have flexible attitudes towards what a writing center should be, whereas English tutors who may have used writing centers as students, may view it as a teaching institution. Although collaboration between the Japanese and English sides are not currently evident, these findings suggest that an open dialogue between the two may help expend the role of writing centers.

Tutors at Western University

Miura

Miura had not formally studied academic writing prior to taking the tutor training course. He read research articles in both Japanese and English and studied writing on his own. He "imitated" ("真似した") the ways the articles were organized and picked up specific phrases from those reading. He had no previous tutoring experience, however, as a doctorate student in developmental phycology, he had always been interested in people's mind and enjoyed working with people. He assumed that tutoring was similar to counseling in ways that the tutor does not provide answers, but together, the tutor and the tutee explore ideas and cultivate the writer's ability to compose. "In counseling", Miura explains, "the counselor helps the client realize what s/he is thinking unconsciously by having a conversation. Then, the client him/herself decide what s/he should do next." ("カウンセリングでは会話を通してクライエントさんに考えていることに気づいてもらう。それからクライエントさん自身で次にすることを決める。") Miura founds that writing

conferencing is similar to counseling in a sense that the tutor's job is to help a student writer become aware of the issues presented in a paper and to come up with solutions to solve those problems.

Tanaka

Tanaka is a religious studies student who is particularly interested in studying the thinking of Kitaro Nishida, a Japanese philosopher. According to Tanaka, Nishida's writing is generally considered to be intricate and hard to follow. Tanaka had previously thought that he understood Nishida's thinking and writing. When he began to write his own papers, he found that he was writing like Nishida, and his writing was not always communicative to its reader. That was when he decided to take the graduate academic writing course, so that he could learn to organize his writing. As a tutor, he enjoys examining and analyzing student writing, so that he can apply analysis to his own writing.

He describes his prior approach to writing as reckless ("がむしゃら"*gamushara*) where he would write whatever that came to his mind. He was also told by his faculty adviser and other older generations of academic that there was no traditions of teaching of writing. Rather, older generations of academics would write based on one's "sense" ("感覚" *kankaku*) and in a way that pleased themselves. In other worlds, there was no system of quality check. He was aware of parts of academic papers, such as introduction and methodology, but did not have a clear understanding of the functions of each part. After having seen examples of student writing, he is now beginning to see patterns in places and kinds of difficulties that many student writers make. It was not always easy for him to strike the right balance between "teaching" ("教えること" *oshieru*) and "facilitating" ("(学ぶのを) 助けること" *tasukeru*), but through practice, he has learn to work collaboratively with the student writers who come to the sessions. As a tutor, he feels responsible to provide a quality conferencing session, so that his "client" can feel a sense of achievement after a session.

Sato

Sato is a first year tutor who studies educational philosophy. He lived in the United States as a child (from age 2 to 6), and growing up, he had always felt that his Japanese was not good enough. In fact during this junior high school years, he was told by his parents that his Japanese was "obscure" ("(君の日本語は）変だよ" *hen*). Since then, he had felt that he needed to improve his communication skills, especially in writing. Once he started the graduate writing seminar, he found that many things he was taught (such as stating a main idea and organizing writing around that main idea) was rather "commonsensical" ("当たり前のこと" *atarimae*), but he realized that he was not making those decisions consciously. Through discussions about writing, he became more aware of the choices he was making and came to enjoy having conversations about writing with other student writers.

He sees his job as a tutor as someone who helps student writers notice errors on their own. Rather than responding to their writing, he mainly asks questions and pushes them further to think about how ideas are connected. When he does comments on writing, however, he responds as a reader who may have interpreted the writer's meaning differently. Through these interactions, his job is to make visible what is clear and unclear to both the reader and the writer themselves.

For Sato, academic writing requires an ability to identify problems, to examine the problem critically, and finally to deliver an analysis in a logical manner. It is difficult to see your writing through another person's perspective. That is why he feel that it is important to share writing with an actual reader in order to become an effective writer and a communicator in any given language.

Zahar

Zahar is an international student from Iran. Her area of study is academic writing and is interested in developing effective teaching strategies. Prior to coming to Western University, she studied academic writing with an English instructor who specialized in teaching of writing, and then she wrote her entire master's thesis in Japanese.

As an international student herself, she understands that L2 writers of Japanese who come to the center are particularly interested in working on their grammar of the Japanese language. However, grammar correction is against the center policy. That is why during a weekly training session, she often leads a discussion on how to assist international students with grammar related questions. She argues that in order for students to understand grammar mistakes, the tutor needs to be able to explain why a certain example does not work. Using actual examples from student writing, she conducts a workshop on how to explain grammar mistakes with her native –Japanese speaking colleagues.

Tutors at Western University

	Nationality	Language of Instruction	Discipline/Research Interest	Role of Tutors (Interviewer's perspective)
Miura (M)	Japanese	Japanese	Developmental Psychology	Helping students identify issues and come up with solutions
Tanaka (M)	Japanese	Japanese	Religious Studies	Balancing between teaching and facilitating
Sato (M)	Japanese	Japanese	Educational Philosophy	Helping student writers notice errors
Zahar (F)	Iranian	Japanese	Academic Writing	Providing mini-grammar lessons rather than grammar correction

Perhaps because the tutors at Western University had different disciplinary backgrounds, Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) approach may fit to describe their

attitudes towards writing conferences. While each tutors had their own specialized interest in their areas of study, they approached tutoring sessions not as subject specialist but as more experienced writers. From this perspective, Western University tutors may be able to share tips on effective writing strategies and guide student writers to become independent learners.

Examples form Western University tutors offer an interesting contrast from John Calvin University tutors. Because all John Calvin University tutors had language teaching background, their attitudes towards writing conferences were oriented either to teaching or language learning (and teaching). On the other hand, perhaps because tutors at Western University were graduate students who were also involved with their own research and writing activities themselves, they had mentality of a more experienced writer (compared to the student writers who came to the center) or a mentor, rather than a teacher. Nevertheless, this comparison reveals that writing backgrounds and previous experiences with the writing center may influence the ways tutors perceive their roles to be at the writing center.

Tutor and Student Writer Perspectives of the Writing Center

The aim of this section was to make visible the kinds of work that was done in the writing center by describing the experiences of the tutors and the tutees who inhabited the writing center either as a tutor or a student writer. These examples showed that there was so simple way to describe the writing center practices.

Throughout their school lives, many Japanese students are oriented towards the competitive academic culture whose goals is to get into the best university possible. However, once a student enters a university, their expectations and priorities change. For example, for those students who want to continue to get good grades, writing centers provides as an editing service to help polish their writing. Others view the kind of questions

that the writing tutors ask as opportunity to practice problem solving. Writing centers can also offer an alternative interpretation of education by offering personalized writing instruction in which individual student writer could make a personal connection with a tutor. Finally, through conversations about writing, students can become aware of their writing processes, which may have not been a priority for many Japanese student writers who had likely focused mainly on an educational outcome (i.e., college entrance examination and its result) rather than the process of learning itself.

As for the tutors' perception, while many tutors at John Calvin University discussed writing center experiences from a teacher's perspective (Perhaps because they were also language teachers), Western University writing center tutors compared their experiences with their own path of leaning to write academically. For those Western University tutors (except for Zahar who was educated in Iran) who had to "figure out," so to speak, academic writing, the writing center provided a place to discuss writing from a process oriented view. Further, through discussions of academic writing across different disciplines, those writing center tutors were becoming increasingly aware of the literacy practices of not only their own disciplines, but also from various communities of practice. For these tutors, then, the writing center provided more than a place of employment. Rather, the center served as a mirror where they can reflect on their own development of writing, and in turn, they could continue to grow as effective writing tutors.

The writing center means different things to people who come to the center as tutors and tutees. Further, each tutor and tutee comes to the center with various expectations and orientations. Part two highlighted the different ways writing center practices are realized in John Calvin University and Western University. Part three shifts the focus back onto John

Calvin University by examining whether or not there are differences in ways writing conferences are conducted between English and Japanese language groups.

VI. Chapter V

Conferencing Strategies

This chapter discusses the data analysis method of video observation recordings and their findings. Once all data was transcribed, analysis of video recording was divided into two stages: tutor strategies and tutees' responses. First, tutor strategies were coded and categorized by adapting Mackiewicz and Thompson's 16 code scheme. In addition, three codes were added: Translating, Inviting, and Alliance building. Because John Calvin University offers L2 writing conferences, tutors who work there are either fluent or have some knowledge about the student writers' native language (s). Thus, when a communication breakdown happened, for example, tutors used the tutees' native language-translated words or sentences to convey their meanings (*translating*). Although asking the tutee what s/he wants to work on during a conference during the opening stage seems to be a standard procedure, Mackiewicz and Thompson's (2015) coding scheme did not include a code which described an instance where the tutor invited the tutee to raise discussion topics. Thus, the code *invitation* was added. The code *alliance building was* separated from the pre-existing, *giving sympathy or empathy* code because their definition of the latter code only included the tutor's recognition that the task is difficult. *Alliance building* code was assigned when the tutor responded to the student writer's wring with a particular kind of empathy which comes from having had similar experiences.

Mackiewicz and Thompson's (2015) coding scheme only describes specific instructional or scaffolding strategies that the tutor use in a conference (i.e., what the tutor does). Because I was interested in the interaction between the tutor and the tutee, I needed to develop a coding scheme that was dialogic. Therefore, the second stage of my analysis

involved developing codes for how the tutee responded to the tutor's conferencing strategies.

Mackiewicz and Thompson's Coding Scheme for Tutoring Strategies and an additional (*) code

Instruction	
Telling	Tutors use little or no mitigation to direct student writers to lower the face threat of their advice.
Suggesting	Tutors use more mitigation (often negative politeness) to lower the face threat of their advice.
Explaining and exemplifying	Tutors offer reasons for and illustration of their advice.
Cognitive Scaffolding	
Pumping	Tutors ask question (or use inquiry statements) that get student writers to think out loud. Pumping can be highly constraining (particularly leading questions) or minimally constraining.
Reading aloud	Tutors read sections of student writer's drafts aloud or read instructor's assignment sheets aloud. They also ask student writes to read their drafts aloud.
Responding as a reader or a listener	Tutors tell student writers what they take away as readers (or listeners), paraphrasing what they think student writers have written (or are saying).
Referring to a previous topic	Tutors refer student writers back to their earlier occurrence of an issue.
Forcing a choice	Tutors present student writers with several alternatives and expect them to choose one.

Prompting	Tutors set up responses from student writers by providing partial responses or by leaving a blank for them to fill in, narrowing the possible answers.
Hinting	Tutors use nonconventional indirectness (rely on context) to raise or refer to an issue.
Demonstrating	Tutors show student writers how to do something.
Inviting*	Tutors invite tutees to raise discussion topics.
Translating*	Tutors translate words/sentences into the tutees' L1.
Motivational Scaffolding	
Showing concern	Tutors build rapport with student writers by demonstrating that they care. Such demonstrations of concern can be formulaic, as when a tutor asks about a student writer's understanding with a collocation, or they can be nonformulaic, as when a tutor attends to a student write's emotional well-being with an individualized comment or question.
Alliance building*	Tutees make comments to indicate that they have felt the same way or had similar experiences.
Praising	Tutors point to student writer's successes with positive feedback and verbal rewards. Praise can be formulaic or nonformulaic.
Reinforcing student writes' ownership and control	Tutors assert that the student writes ultimately makes the decisions.
Being optimistic or using humor	Tutors convey positivity with light-hearted joking and

	by asserting a student writer's ability to persevere in the task.
Giving sympathy or empathy	Tutors express their understanding that the task is difficult.

During the initial run-through for the tutee's response (the second stage), transcribed data was broadly categorized into two themes: Processing and Cooperating. Once these themes were identified, my next goal was to find evidence for the themes, as Blakeslee and Fleischer (2007) write, coding is "a systematic way of indicating in your data the themes and categories that you have identified" (p 176). After codes were identified, they were then grouped back together, which then led to the construction of themes.

The Coding Scheme for the Tutee's Response

Processing		
No response	Tutees do not respond to tutors' questions/comments/suggestions. Tutees appear to be thinking what was just said.	
Repeating	Tutees repeat what was said by tutors.	
Respond in L1	Tutees respond to tutors' question/prompt in their first language.	
Surprise	Tutees appear surprised at tutees comments/suggestions/instruction.	
Questioning	Tutees ask tutors clarification questions.	
Cooperating		
Explaining	Tutees explain their writing or answer to tutees' question.	
Agreement	Tutees agree with tutors' comment and make change to their text accordingly.	

The following section focuses on the analysis of the conferencing strategies that tutors at John Calvin University employ. Based on video observations of tutoring session, it

highlights the similarities and differences in tutoring strategies employed by the English tutors and Japanese tutors at John Calvin University.

Conference Stages

Mackiewicz and Thompson (2015) separated tutoring sessions into three stages: the Opening Stage, the Instruction Stage, and the Closing Stage. Generally speaking, both Japanese and English-speaking tutors at John Calvin University writing center spent a brief (less than a minute) moment in the beginning of each writing conference getting acquainted with student writers and finding out the tutee's goals. Once there was a plan, the tutor's next move was to ask the student writer to read their paper (though not all tutors employed this technique). By asking the tutee to read papers out loud, the tutor set expectations for the session, which was that the student writer was expected to participate in a session rather than being a passive observer of an editing process.

Opening Stage

Tutors began sessions by introducing themselves and having small talk to break the ice. In addition to the topic of paper, tutors also spent a brief period of time trying to find out for which class and instructor it was written and what the requirements were by going over assignment sheets which were provided by the instructor. In a case where there was no assignment sheet, the tutor asked the tutee to describe the context for writing. In order to shift to the next stage, while some tutors asked what the student writers wanted to focus on, others began giving instructions right away, for example after S (Student) 2 finished reading a section of her paper, ET (English Tutor)1 began giving feedback by saying, "Alright, so I will start at the beginning". S2 was a frequent and returning user of the center whose English level was also advanced. There was a clear sense of rapport between her and the tutor, and

because of S2's familiarity with the writing center practices, ET1 was able to move quickly to the instruction stage. Whether or not the tutee had previous experience with the writing center, tutor-tutee interaction during this opening stage set the tone for the session or determined how the rest of the session was going to be carried out.

Instruction Stage

In general, the instruction stage was initiated by the tutor's question, "What do you want to do today?" or when the tutor asked a tutee to read his/her paper out loud. While this reading-out-loud technique was a regular practice to the returning tutees, first-timers reacted with surprise or confusion. For example, after a brief introduction, ET2 attempted to quickly move into the instruction stage by first asking what the student writer wanted to work on and, then, asking him to read the paper out loud. However, never having to come to the writing center before, S4/ acted confused as to what he was asked to do.

1	ET2	My name is XXX. What's your name?
2	S4	XXX
3	ET2	Nice to meet you. So what do you got here? (T reads the info sheet). 500 words, … final draft…. Ok. So what would you like to check today?
4	S4	えっ？ ええ～。う～ん。[What? Whaaaat? Ummmm] (5-second pause. S shuffles through his papers.) Please read it. If you… if you have... if you find the mistake, please change.
5	ET2	Ok. So, lets' see (T flips through the papers) …. First I want to ask is… I noticed some marks here. What are these?
6	S4	This is my teacher, check this. Check my report.
7	ET2	Okay.
8	S4	First. ..
9	ET2	Okay, so this is your introduction. So, (T points to the paper with a pen) from here to here. (T looks up) What I would like to do is… read it together. So, what I would like you to do is read it aloud what you have written.
10	S4	ああ。[Oh..] (S looks down at the paper).
11	ET2	And I will read it as well. Sometimes as you read it, you can find mistakes. And I will also mark mistakes. Okay?
12	S2	So, I speak.. speak?

13 ET2 Yeah, so we will read it together and work on it. Sometimes you can find the mistakes and I can find the mistakes, too. Okay?
14 S2 …. (S stares at the paper for a few seconds)
15 ET2 So, do you want to start?
16 S2 (S starts reading)

In turn 4, the student writer could not conceal his surprise when he was asked to set the agenda for the session. After a few seconds, he managed to tell the tutor that he wanted his paper edited by saying, “Please read it. If you… if you have... if you find the mistake, please change”. Rather than telling the tutee writing conferences were not editing services directly, the tutor steered the tutee’s attention away by asking about the marks (which were made by the student writer’s instructor) and the organization of the paper. When the tutor asks to read the paper out loud because it will help “find mistakes,” the tutee was still skeptical by asking if he is the one “speaking” during the session. Finally, the tutor got the student writer to read the paper; nonetheless, in the post session interview, S2 discussed his discontent about the tutor’s request to read the paper out loud. Although the tutor explained how reading was beneficial (ET 2, “Sometime, as you read it, you can find mistakes.”), S2 felt uncomfortable as he reacted, “なんで読まなきゃいけないか意味が分かんない。I had no idea why I had to read. What was the point?” (*My translation*). In another instance, another student writer (S1) was confused about what he was asked to do.

1 ET1 OK. Can you read this to me? (ET1 incorporates wait time – 8 seconds)
2 S1 …. (S1 stares at his paper for 8 seconds)
3 ET1 Can you READ it?
4 S1 (S reads one sentence)
5 ET1 READ it.
6 S1 (S slowly begins and reads an entire passage)

He stops after reading one sentence in the initial attempt. After being prompted repeatedly, he then proceeds to read an entire passage. In this particular instance, however, the tutor did

not explain why the student writer was asked to read the paper out loud, which probably added to his confusion about why that particular request was being made. On the other hand, a more advanced-level student seemed to transition into reading phase more smoothly even if it was her first time visiting the writing center.

1	ET1	Okay. So, can you read it to me?
2	S8	Yes. (S starts reading her paper. T reads along quietly, making marking on paper) And I want to read this (pointing to a poem written in Russian) but, too much difficult, so I want to make it easy.
3	ET1	Okay, so will you put this here? So, you think it's difficult for the listener?
4	S8	Yes.
5	ET1	Okay.
6	S8	(S starts reading again. S needs help with pronunciation of some words)

In this situation, S8 was working on a script for an English presentation class, in which she was asked to discuss a famous place. Having lived in Russian as a student-dancer, she decided to introduce the town she lived and a poem associated with the place. She began reading the paper as instructed, but she was able to pause and tell the tutor that she needed help restructuring her paper, so it would communicate better. As these examples suggest, a common conference practice of reading paper out loud can be confusing and intimidating to newcomers who may perceive writing tutors to be providers of editing services. Another factor that influenced the way the tutee reacted to a request to read out loud was the student writer's language level. Although the idea of the writing center is a safe place where student writers receive individualized, personal writing instruction where there is no grading, L2 writers may feel nervous about performing poorly in front of a native speaker of their target language. Furthermore, because English tutors at John Calvin University are also classroom teachers, student writers may also feel intimidated to read out loud, especially if the tutee is also their English language instructor. This last explanation is supported by the response of

students to this technique of reading out loud when it was employed by Japanese tutors. All four student writers of the Japanese language had near-native fluency of the target language and had no apprehension about reading the paper out loud in front of the native-speaker tutors.

Once a session entered the instruction stage, the tutors employed various strategies (instruction, motivational scaffolding, cognitive scaffolding) to navigate the tutees throughout the session. In order to look into specific strategies, however, the instruction stage of conference sessions must be, first, understood structurally.

Topic Episodes

Mackiewicz and Thompson's (2015) use topic episodes to analyze writing conferences at a macrolevel. A topic episode is defined by content, rather than turn-at-talk boundaries, and it can be started either by a tutor or a student writer. The researchers use the term "launch" to indicate topic episodes which were started by tutors with instruction or motivational scaffolding, and the term "introduce" is used to indicate topic episodes which were started by student writers. In this current research, the analysis of topic episodes will make visible 1) the frequency of topic episodes within a given time period, 2) comparison of the frequency of topic episodes between English session and Japanese sessions.

TABLE 1.1 Launch/Initiation/and Introduction of and Length in Topic Episodes of All Sessions

Conference	Topic Episodes			
	Duration (minutes)	Tutor Launched/Initiated	Student-Writer Introduced	Total
Total	325	356	69	425
Mean		1.09	0.2	1.31

Although each scheduled session was 30 minutes long, duration of actual conferences varied because some sessions were much shorter while others went overtime when there was no reservation in the following slot. There were total of 425 topic episodes in 11 tutoring sessions, which was 325 minutes in total. The findings revealed that, on average, tutors launched 1.09 topic episodes per minute whereas student writers introduced a topic episode 0.2 times per minute. This means that tutors were five times more likely to launch topic episodes than student writers, suggesting that tutors were in charge of the general direction of conferencing.

TABLE 1.2 Launch/Initiation/and Introduction of and Length in Topic Episodes of English Sessions

Conference	Duration (minutes)	Topic Episodes		
		Tutor Launched/Initiated	Student-Writer Introduced	Total
ET1 – S1	12	11	0	11
ET1 – S2	27	25	6	31
ET2 – S4	10	16	1	17
ET 3 – S 6	30	43	3	46
ET 4 – S 7	30	42	2	44
ET 1 – S 8	33	32	5	37
Total	142	169	17	186
Mean		1.19	0.12	1.31

TABLE 2.1 Launch/Initiation/and Introduction of and Length in Topic Episodes of Japanese Sessions

Conference	Duration (minutes)	Topic Episodes		
		Tutor Launched/Initiated	Student-Writer Introduced	Total
JI1 - S3	42	22	9	31
JT 2 - S5	40	33	17	50
JT 3 – S 5	33	36	16	52
JT 1 – S 9	33	30	4	34
JT 2 – S 10	35	30	2	32
Total	183	151	48	199
Mean		0.83	0.26	1.09

In term of the difference between language backgrounds, on average, English tutors launched 1.19 topic episodes per minute while student-writer of English writing introduced 0.12 topic episodes per minute. In other words, English tutors were almost ten times more likely to launch a topic episode than student writers. On the other hand, Japanese tutors launched 0.83 topic episodes per minute while student writers of Japanese writing introduced 0.26 topic episodes per minute. Japanese tutors were three more times likely to launch a topic episode than student writers of Japanese writing. These findings revealed that English tutors were three times more likely to launch topic episodes than Japanese tutors. This might have to do with the fact that the student writers of English writing varied in their language level. While some English-language student writers were able to converse with the tutors with relative ease, other student writers (of English language) needed help with language at a fundamental level. Thus, English tutors needed to provide more instruction, for example by telling the conjugation of a verb, than Japanese tutors who were working with more advanced learners of L2.

Another way of thinking about topic episodes is by different levels of topics that were introduced. Because student writers of more advanced (language) level, in general, were able to approach their writing with more global concerns (e.g., content and organization), topic episodes they initiated had a wider range of variety than the topic episodes involving lower (language) level students whose concerns were mainly local, surface level errors. For instance as the following examples illustrate, S2 (an advanced-level English writer) asked questions that ranged, in terms of topics, from how to solve an immediate problem (Example 1) to reflecting on her own development of writing abilities (Example 2).

Examples of topic episodes initiated by S2

1	I'm writing the next part, but… How can I say? … Continued?
2	I learned how to write an essay when I was in Australia. I wrote only a few reports in Japanese, so maybe if I try to translate from Japanese to English, that is kind of hard for me.

In the first example, S2 is unclear about how she might advance a discussion from one paragraph to another. The student writer had written an additional passage, but she was unsure about how this additional discussion would fit with the rest of the paper. In example 2, S2 reflects on her process of writing in the target language. Although her native language is Japanese, she prefers to write in English (in academic settings) because that was the language of instruction in which she learned to write. In contrast, the following examples illustrate local error concerns that were addressed involving lower (language) level students.

Examples of topic episodes initiated by a tutor who was working with a lower (language) level student

1	Ok, so from the beginning, you want to start with, "on". "On April 21st, 2015, Japan's maglev train.."
2	This needs to be a past tense.

The first example followed immediately after the tutor asked the tutee to read the text to be reviewed. In fact, this entire session was lead primarily by the tutor who directed the tutee's attention to local grammatical errors. Rather than having a conversation about the content or the organization of the paper, for example, addressing the grammatical and surface level concerns remained the main topics throughout the session. The second example is an additional illustration of such an instance where the tutor points out an error. As these examples show, the kinds of questions and concerns that were raised during a session were dramatically different depends on the tutee's language level. While the range of topics involving higher (language) level student writers were wide, topic episodes concerning

lower (language) level students were limited to more local, surface level errors. (More discussion of qualitative analysis of tutoring strategies to follow in a later section.)

Closing Stage

In most cases, the closing stage of conferences was brief. Conference sessions with lower-(language) level student writers tended to be organized around a sentence-level correction, and the tutors ended the instruction phase rather abruptly when the time was up by asking the tutee to fill out an evaluation form. Conference sessions with more advanced-(language) level students were organized by topics on which the tutor and the tutee agreed in the beginning of the instruction stage, and once the goals set in the beginning were accomplished, tutors asked whether or not if the tutee had any additional questions and transitioned smoothly into the closing stage.

Tutors, in general, focused on providing tutees with "souvenirs" throughout the instruction session. A souvenir can be a note about which sentence to revise and how and/or a review of a grammar point, and tutors generally kept those information on a separate piece of paper during a session. These notes can be made either by the tutor or the tutee, but the purpose is that the tutee has something s/he can reflect on after leaving the writing center. Rather than having the tutor summarize the conference session (perhaps a common closing stage practice in the U.S.), these souvenir-giving activities were embedded throughout the instruction stage, and there was no additional goal setting or summarizing activities during the closing stage. In the end, both tutors and tutees thanked each other, and in addition to the evaluation sheet, a photo copy of the document that was discussed during the conference was made to be included in the tutee's file that is kept in the receptions area.

Qualitative Analysis of Tutoring Strategies

According to writing center lore, which guided writing center practices since the 1980s, writing conferences should be controlled by students, and it maintains that tutors and students are equal. However, more recent research suggests that the tutor's roles are more complicated and that students' satisfaction is higher if tutors can guide them throughout a session (Thompson et. al, 2009). Prior to coming to the writing center, student writers of both languages at John Calvin University expected to receive instruction from the tutors as first-timers explained that they had assumed that the tutor would read their work quietly corrections directly on the paper that the student writer brought. When they were asked to participate in the conversation, (rather than simply receiving feedback on their writing), however, student writers were surprised by this expectation. Nevertheless, both English and Japanese tutors used instruction and cognitive and motivational strategies combined to guide the tutees through conference sessions.

In general, most tutors incorporated reading aloud (cognitive) strategy to get acquainted with the text on that the tutee was working. Although some student writers were repeat users of the writing center, tutors often worked with an entirely new student writer (a first-timer) in each session, and even if a tutee was a returning student writer, s/he would bring in a new assignment, so that the text they would work on would be new to the tutor. In addition to the benefit that the student writers may notice their own mistakes while reading out loud, this strategy provided the tutor an opportunity to get on the same page with the tutees by finding out the type of text they were working on and to notice types of errors or mistakes that they might make. Tutors were respectful of the tutees goals for the session (which they negotiate in the beginning of the instructional stage) and focused their feedback

only on the topic the tutee identified initially; however, if the tutee noticed an additional problematic area while reading, the tutor expanded the conversation to include the new topic. For example, in the session in which the following excerpt was found, the tutee (S7) originally asked the tutor (ET3) to "check [the] grammar". However, once he finished reading the paper, he noticed that content of a body paragraph did not match with the thesis statement which was included in the introductory paragraph.

1	ET3	Did you see anything beside the ones you caught? Did you see anything you feel unsure about? Or a question about?
2	S7	Fourth paragraph.
3	ET3	Fourth paragraph?
4	S7	Actually it's not about grammar. Contents.
5	ET3	Yeah. I'm so happy you said that because I was thinking about that too. What about the content?

After going over a few grammar mistakes she identified while listening (and reading quietly at the same time) to S7 read his paper, she asked if the tutee had additional questions. Asking whether or not the tutor "caught" any additional errors or concerns, was a way of the tutor (ET3) to invite the tutee (S7) to bring in additional topics of discussion. Although S7 was initially only concerned with grammar mistakes, the tutor (ET3) was able to expand the discussion of writing to include a larger global concern. After S7 mentioned his newly discovered concern, ET3 proceeded to provide feedback by explaining why the current organization was problematic. Because the tutee (S7) had specified grammar to be the topic of conversation in the beginning and the tutor (ET3) was committed to provide feedback on the areas that the tutee identified as challenging, the issue related to content would have not resolved. However, the reading aloud strategy gave the tutee an opportunity to read his own paper as a reader (or as an audience) which allowed him to notice a structural error which would be more detrimental in conveying a message than grammar errors.

As the example above illustrates, tutors made sure that the conference conversations were led (in terms of topics) by student writers, but once those topics were identified, tutors used various strategies to navigate the tutee through their talk about writing. While conversations with lower English level student writers were dominated by telling both English and Japanese tutors used suggesting with higher-language level student writers to guide through a conference session. For example in the following excerpt, ET1 identified an unclear sentence and used pumping to ask about a certain word. After S2's verbal explanation behind the choice of the word, ET1 responded as a reader by validating the clarity of the explanation, and finally, ET1 suggested that S2 would include these additional information in her writing.

1	ET1	So what do you mean by "focused"?
2	S2	Actually, I don't know what to say [ET1 waits for S2, 5 seconds]
3	S2	I wanted to say…I really don't know why I wrote this.
4	ET1	Okay.
5	S2	I wanted to say that women or lower class people have to work, especially for women, the society, many people think women should not have education at school, so even if women wanted to study, they cannot read letters. So even if she tries to study by herself, maybe she can't, she couldn't because she cannot read. Maybe, also, lower class people have to work for living, so they cannot focus on studying or reading.
6	ET1	You don't have to write it all down now, but exactly what you just said made it very clear. You can just put a period there and say, "for example, women… weren't allowed to have education. They had to work. Lower class people had to work, so they cannot focus on education." And things like that.

Rather than telling the tutee to fix her writing in a particular way, this chain of strategies (pumping – responding as a reader - suggesting) allowed the tutor to help the tutee become aware of her own thought process and that it provided the student writer an opportunity to elaborate her idea.

Because English tutors at John Calvin University writing center were also learners of Japanese at a high-intermediate to fluent level of proficiency, they were able to offer English to Japanese or Japanese to English translation of words or sentence in question during conversations with student writers, especially with those whose language level was lower.

1	ET1	OK. So from the beginning, hmmmm, you want to start with "on, on April 21st, 2015, Japan's maglev train..." And this needs to be a past tense.
2	S1	Ah.
3	ET1	So. BREAK.
4	S1	Breaks.
5	ET1	In the past. So, まえ (before) ?
6	S1	まえ (before) ?
7	ET1	うん (yes)
8	S1	こわした (broke) ?
9	ET1	Yes. 英語で(in English)?
10	S1	Break. Broke?

In this episode, ET1 was trying to elicit the past tense form of the verb “break”. When S1 gave a third-person, singular conjugation of the verb, the tutor switched to Japanese to ask a question. Once the tutee was able to provide an answer in Japanese, the tutor then asked him to translate it back to English. In contrast, Japanese tutors did not use translation as a strategy because 1) learners of Japanese came from different languages and the tutors did not necessarily speak (or use) the learner’s native language, and 2) the international students who used the writing center (or at least the ones who agreed to participate in the study) were advanced learners of Japanese whose language related concerns were not necessarily grammatical or syntactical level issues, but their goals were to sound more natural in Japanese. Similarly, advanced English learners who used the writing center as student writers wanted to receive feedback that would help their writing sound closer to one that is done by the native speaker.

While the translating strategy may seem helpful to lower-(language) level student, it may be received as offensive by some student writers, especially if the student is an advanced L2 learner. In a post-session interview, one advanced English level student mentioned that translation was: “良かれと思ってやってくれてるんだそうけど、練習したくて来てるんだから[やめてほしい]。” “I’m sure they use Japanese because they want to help us, but I’m here to practice English and to learn English expressions, so I don’t really like it when they do that” (*my translation*). As this example suggests, language learners have different goals depends on their target language levels.

While lower-language level students needed instructions at a sentence level, more advanced students tended to focus on native-like expressions. For example, all Japanese-language student writers who agreed to participate in the study asked the tutor to review expressions, so that their written Japanese would sound more natural.

1	S5	なんか、多すぎて消せるところを。必要なことは書いたと思うんですけど。整理ができなくて。ちょっとスマートな形でしゃべりたいというか。(It’s too messy. I think I wrote what I needed to say, but I can’t organize my writing. I would like to sound more composed and organized.”)
2	JT1	なるほど (I see)

In the example above, the tutee (S5) uses the Japanese loan word スマート[sumaaato] to express her goal for the session. This term comes from the English word “smart” and can be translated as “sharp” or “concise”. Prior to coming to the session, S5 was able to get ideas and put those down in the paper, but she felt that her writing lacked organization. By focusing on concision, she had hoped that her Japanese writing would flow better and in turn, would sound more natural.

In another example, the student writer (S8) was concerned that her Japanese writing may not be communicative because of an influence from her first language. In the following excerpt, which was taken from the opening stage, S8 and the tutor (JT2) were discussing to determine the directions of the session.

1	JT2	「表現」って書いてあるんですが、日本人がこういう言い方しないのかな、ということですか？(You wrote “expressions” here. Did you have questions about Japanese expressions?)
2	S8	そっち。(Yes, that is what I meant.)
3	JT2	はい。(Okay.)
4	S8	やっぱり、韓国人なので、韓国のような文章の表現がちょっと違うので、わたし伝えたいことがちゃんと伝えられない感じがあるかもしれないので。(Well, I’m Korean, and I think my Japanese might sound Korean because of the way I think in Korean. I want to make sure that Japanese people can understand my writing.)
5	JT2	なるほど。わかりました。じゃあ、そこをみていきましょうか？とてもいい目標だと思います。私は実は韓国語を習ったことがないので、ここ！っていうところがありますか？(I see. Let’s look at expressions then. I think that is a really good goal. You know, I have never studied Korean. Is there a particular expression you had a question about?)
6	S8	ここ？(A particular part)
7	JT2	自分が書いてて、ここは韓国語らしいって思うのはない？(When you read, did you find any expressions that sounded Korean?)
8	S8	はい。(No, I didn’t find any.)
9	JT2	じゃあ、一番不安なところとかってありますか？(Then, is there any area you are unsure about?)
10	S8	はじめから。(I would like to look at it from the beginning.)
11	JT2	はじめから。したら、はじめから行きましょうか？えっと、音読、声に出して読むと、間違いに気づきやすいのでここではよく読んでもらっています。それじゃあ、お願いしてもいい？(From the beginning. Okay. Well, reading out loud will help you find mistakes on your own. We often ask students to read their papers. Can you read it?)

Although she did not specify a particular expression that she had questions about, S8 was concerned that she had embedded Korean (her first language) expressions in her Japanese writing and was concerned that native Japanese readers may not understand her meaning. Following this conversation, S8 and JT2 went over the entire paper, which was read out loud

by the student writer. JT2 was able to provide a “native check” which validated S8’s ability to write in her second language.

Because of the nature of a bilingual writing center, John Calvin University writing center tutors need to address language related issued at times. For example, there are fundamental difference in ways subjects and verbs interact between English and Japanese. In the following example, ET1 pointed out the sentence where the meaning was lost because the subject of the sentence was unclear.

1	ET1	So this is where I don’t understand (T read the next sentence). “I think that it stopped the new record any longer”… So you think?
2	S1	You?
3	ET1	No.
4	S1	Oh, I?
5	ET1	Yeah.
6	S1	こえられない[It cannot surpass (something)]。
7	ET1	Ah.
8	S1	Not break.
9	ET1	Ah… So What won’t break?.... The world record?
10	S1	Yeah.
11	ET1	So, “I think that…” What is “IT”?
12	S1	The world record.
13	ET1	OK.
14	ET1	So “I think that the world record stopped the new record any longer.”.. So what was “Stopped the new records”?
15	S1	World record…
16	ET1	Okay.
17	S1	Uh? これ以上変えられない[It cannot be changed any longer]。
18	ET1	“I don’t think it will change”… Well “WHAT” won’t change?
19	S1	(S responds)
20	ET1	Yeah. 何が[What won’t change]?
21	S1	記録 [the record]。
22	ET1	Ah-huh. What’s another way to say that? So, you are thinking “I don’t think it will change? I don’t think the world record will change.” 変えない? 変えられない [cannot be changed]?
23	S1	こえられない [cannot be surpassed]。
24	ET1	Would it not be able to change? Well, もっと簡単。簡単に[In simple English]。
25	S1	え、記録が出ない [Ummm. The record cannot be renewed]。

26	ET1	Ok. きろく[the record]。。。So , world record won't … シンプル英語。一番わかりやすい英語で [in simple, most understandable English]。。。
27	S1	Stop.
28	ET1	Okay. What will stop?
29	S1	Stop the record.
30	ET1	OK. So what? What will stop the record? The train? : I think ..that… "it will stop the world record"… so WHAT will "stop the world record"? なにが(What is it)? stop, world, record?
31	S1	電車が。こえられない (The train cannot renew the record)。
32	ET1	Okay. I think that (points back to the paper) "maglev train…"
33	S1	これ (this)。
34	ET1	So, "I think that the maglev train will not train the world record." And "again". So, もう一度変えられない(It cannot be changed once more)?
35	S1	うん (yes)。
36	ET1	So, "I think that the maglev train will not break the world record again"

ET1 began by asking the student writer (S1) to clarify his meaning by eliciting anther verb in Japanese which was then translated into English ("it stopped" was changed to "it won't break"). ET1 then asked about the subject of the sentence (Turn 11: "What is 'IT'?"). When the next verb "change" (which is a transitive verb) was brought up, the tutor needed to ask about the object of the sentence, from which she was able to draw the word "record" from S1. At turn 24, ET1 switched her approach by asking the student to communicate his meaning in "simple" English rather than a sentence that was translated to English from Japanese. This effort drew yet another verb "stop," which allowed S1 to communicate the main idea of the sentence. Although this verb was not included in the final version of the sentence ("I think that the maglev train will not break the world record again."), it helped the student writer to identify the subject of the sentence.

This example indicates that what may seem like a simple concept to a native speaker of a language (for example in English, a simple sentence has a subject and a predicate) may not be grasped so easily by L2 writers. In Japanese, subjects are often omitted (or implied)

in a series of sentences once the topic is established between the writer/speaker and the reader/listener. This could cause ambiguity, especially if the recipient is not a native speaker of Japanese, or if a native Japanese-speaking individual applies Japanese rules and expectation when writing in English. S1, in the example above, composed the sentence, "I think that it stopped the new record any longer," with a cultural perspective in which the reader and the writer share the same contextual knowledge. On the other hand, ET1 comes from a language background in which each sentence has a clear subject and a verb. In order for S1 to write clearly, in this instance, he needed to not only demonstrate his grammatical knowledge of the English language, but also become aware of the expectations of the English language at a fundamental level. There was a lot of exchange between the tutor and the tutee on this particular segment, which essentially was built around one sentence. After many iterations, S1 was able to revise what may have been once a writer-based sentence to a more reader-based sentence that has two constituents of a simple English sentence.

The video observation revealed that both English and Japanese tutors used various strategies to guide student writers through conference sessions. There were no particular difference in ways the tutors of both language groups interacted with the student writers. However, sessions with lower-(language) level students tended to be oriented around a sentence level corrections and sessions with more advanced-(language) level students were more content, organization, and style related. In either case (lower or advanced level), language instruction was a main component of conference sessions at the writing center at John Calvin University.

VII. Chapter VI

Roles of Writing Centers – A Comparison and Contrast between John Calvin University and Western University

The chapter draws from the interview data to characterize writing center practices at John Calvin University and Western University. All interview data, except from the English tutors and Director at John Calvin University writing center, was collected in Japanese, and such data is presented in a dual language manner. John Calvin University offers writing conferences in English as well as Japanese as second languages. From this university, three administrators, six tutors (four English-speaking and two Japanese-speaking) and eleven student writers participated in the study. From Western University, which primarily offers Japanese-language writing tutoring to both native speakers and international students, two administrators and five tutors (four native-speakers and one non-native-speakers of Japanese) agreed to speak with the interviewer. The interview data collected from these two sites allowed the researcher to perform (1) a comparison and contrast between English conferencing and Japanese conferencing within one center and (2) a comparison between a bilingual center and a monolingual center. The aim of this chapter is to make visible the current writing conference practices in the Japanese university context through a three-way contrast.

The review of literature revealed several themes in writing center research. The following themes are used as frameworks for discussion in this chapter: method vs. site; stigmatization and legitimatization; name and location; and pedagogy. In particular, while the idea of writing conferencing emerged as a way to provide more personalized instruction, the characterizations of the writing center practices go back and forth between the center as

a *method*, where the approach to teaching of writing is remedial, and the center as a *site*, where the student writers are provided with opportunities to discuss writing as a process. Historically speaking, the writing center has not completely escaped the image of "writing-program housewives" (Carino, 2001), and writing centers across the US are exercising expanded roles – from offering recourse libraries for writing teachers to sponsoring poetry readings – in order to legitimatize the works they do. Nevertheless, writing centers are widely spread in the US, and there are one-on-one tutoring service in almost all colleges, and what the center is called and where it is located will tell a lot about how such a center is viewed at a particular institution. For example, some writing centers may be housed within an English department and viewed as an English clinic, while others are considered a subdivision of a larger learning center, in which tutoring is considered as part of collaborative learning. In terms of pedagogy, many writing centers operate with the mission to promote independent learning with an emphasis on a student writer's own process of writing. In a one-on-one setting, writing centers teach student writers (and tutors) to collaborate with others. The popular writing center lore persisted in the writing center research since the 1980s. The lore upholds that writing conferences should be controlled by student writers. However, more recent studies reveal that student satisfaction is higher if tutors can guide them throughout a session. A skillful tutor, then, is a collaborator who can answer student writers' questions and give a directive without being to hierarchical.

Based on the interview data collected from two centers, this section examines the roles of university writing centers in the Japanese university. While the idea of tutoring carries an egalitarian (as in peer tutoring) or a remedial notion in the US context, the Japanese many associate one-on-one instruction with elitism because of its role in the

competitive college entrance preparation. As for the act of writing itself, Japanese students are acculturated into the idea of a "good" Japanese citizen through the strict, script policies in the *Kokugo Kyoiku* (National Language Education). In these settings, students are not necessarily encouraged to express or form opinions, especially in an extended prose. Why, then, are there writing centers in this context where there is no apparent needs for writing? Through an examination of interview data, this section explore the role of writing center as sponsor of writing at the Japanese university context.

John Calvin University

John Calvin University's writing center is directed by an American, English instructor who originally went to Japan to teach the English language after graduating from college. He then earned a master's degree from a Japanese university. His university was the first institution of higher education in Japan to open a writing center in the early 2000s, and it has been the leader of the writing center movement since then in Japan. As a graduate student, he was an active member of the writing center practices; he not only worked as a tutor, but he also published manuscripts which are now widely used as tutor training manuals in various university writing centers in Japan. When he was hired, he brought up the idea of the writing center to, first, the English Department and to the central administration at John Calvin University. The proposal was accepted without too many hurdles as the director explained that "I was successful of convincing them because writing centers don't cost a lot of money and is good image building for the university."

The primary service that the center offers is writing conferencing. The center is open three days a week (MWF) and from 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Each session is 30 minutes long, and tutoring is available by reservation or on a walk-in basis (if available). On contrary

to the American predecessor, which carries a sense of stigmatization, and thus needs to legitimatize its work through offering services other than tutoring, John Calvin University writing center does not offer any services other than conferencing.

The Writing Support Center, as it is officially named, is located in the General Education Building, and it offers second language tutoring services to undergraduate students in English and Japanese. Although the center receives its own budget and offers tutoring services in two languages, the writing center is operated under the auspices of the English Department as the director reports to the Chair of English Department. Yet, the systems of ongoing training and professional development are quite separate between the two language tutoring services.

All English tutors, at the time of the interviews, were participants of teaching fellows programs. Out of four English tutors (three females and one male), three of them were from a US-based sister university with John Calvin University, which also has a missionary background and a strong emphasis on international exchange. These tutors (all females) had completed their bachelor's degrees and received a one-month long training in a Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) certificate prior to coming to Japan. The fourth tutor (male) was from a public, research university. At the time of the interview, he was in a process of completing a master's degree in language teaching. He was doing this remotely in Japan to receive the degree from his home university. John Calvin University and his university has a teacher exchange program, in which John Calvin University sends Japanese language instructors in exchange for some teachers of English language from the receiving institution. This exchange program was relatively new at the time of the interviews, and he was one of the first teachers to be sent from his university. At John

Calvin University, all four teachers taught a mandatory English course as sole instructors, and writing center duties as tutors were one of the responsibilities they assumed when they began working there.

As for the tutors of Japanese language, there were three Japanese tutors at the time of the interviews, and all of them were recent graduates of the program. In order to qualify, an applicant must be either a current student or a recent graduate of the master's degree program in teaching Japanese as a second language. Perhaps, because the requirement was a possession of or an enrollment in a more advanced degree program or because they had entered the graduate program as adults after experiencing professional careers, Japanese tutors tended to be older than English tutors.

The users of the writing center were aware of the age differences between the English and the Japanese tutors, and this age differences affected the ways student writers' view the tutors. For example, few student writers explained that because the English tutors were recent graduates of a bachelor's degree program, they did not necessarily see them as teachers of the English language. Rather, they viewed the English tutors as "姉貴" (*aneki* or "big sisters (or brother)") who can give advice about English. On the other hand, students viewed the Japanese tutors as "teachers" as student writers referred to them as "先生" （*sensee* －Japanese for "teachers"). This might be explained by the Japanese cultural attitude towards people are older as older Japanese people would naturally gain more respect from the younger generation.

Although the student writers viewed English tutors to be closer than the Japanese tutors, they were baffled by the idea of tutoring as those students were trying to understand the relationship with the English tutors. One student writer described, "先生以上、でも

友達よりは遠い。言葉が通じないからかもしれないですけど、友達皆いた感覚ではない。（“I think [the tutors] are more than teachers, but not as close as friends. I don’t feel as comfortable as friends with the tutors because I don’t fully understand their language”）. Another student explained,”やっぱり先生じゃないんですか？成績はもらわないけど、教えてもらう立場なんで。” “I still see them as teachers. They don’t give me grades, but they are teaching writing”. As these comments suggest, student writes feel a certain degree of distance between the tutors and themselves because of the language differences and their roles as the one who provide instruction and the other who receives it. Nevertheless, another student felt that, although it may be a temporary connection, she was beginning to feel that she was forming a personal relationship with English tutors. She explained:

> 友達とまではいきませんけど、でも結構話せるというか。結構実体験に元ずく課題とか多いんですよね。だからチューターさんも読んでいけば「ああ、この子はこんなことがあったんだな。」とかわかると思うんで、そういうところでおたがいに「ああ、そうなんだ。」と理解ができるというか、そういう面で友達とまではいかないけど、話してくださるネイティブの方。
>
> I don’t consider them as my friends, but I feel I can be pretty open with them. Because we have to write many personal essays for English Core and the tutors read those essay, I feel that they know us. That’s why I feel that they are closer to a friend than a teacher but not exactly a friend. I like to be able to practice my English with native speakers who, I feel, understand us.

As the review of the education system revealed, Japanese students are used to expressing feelings and emotions in *Kokugo Kyoiku*, but the English language education (or in any other subjects) does not necessarily provide opportunities to write sentences other than translating exercises. Through interaction with native speakers of English in the writing center, student writers at John Calvin University are able to practice such skills in a second language and getting to know themselves as writers.

Writing Center Expectations

Because all English tutors were of US origin, they had some experiences or understanding about the idea of the writing center prior to coming to John Calvin University. On the other hand, none of the Japanese tutors had had any prior experience with writing conferencing, as one Japanese tutor mentioned, "ほとんど（イメージが）何もない感じで、ただ留学生に対してネイティブの日本人として、あとは日本語教育も理解したうえで「書く」ということを手助けするというそれぐらいの知識しかありませんでした。" ("I was not even able to imaging what a tutoring session might look like. I just understood that it was a service provided by native speakers for learners of Japanese to help them write in the target language.") While the expectations and training of Japanese English tutors are quite different, the idea of language education is strongly tied to the writing center at John Calvin University. Specifically, there is a general attitude among the tutors (and the tutees) that privileges the native speaker model. Student writers at John Calvin University feels that there is a certain level of distance between the tutors and themselves. In this sense, the American idea of (or classification of) "peer" tutors do not necessarily fit the Japanese counterpart. Further, even within a one-on-one setting, the student's perspective was led by the cultural attitude towards the authority of the teacher in the classroom.

Because of their immersion with the teacher-centered pedagogy, Japanese university students are familiar (and perhaps, most comfortable) with the directive approach to teaching. On the contrary, the writing center belief encourages students to be in charge of the learning experience. This expectation was foreign, especially, to the new tutees as the following excerpts exemplify:

> 自分が書いてて悪いところとかあったらちゃんと指摘してくれるだろうとか。こことか文脈とかそういうのを指摘してもらえるものだと思ってみました。実際来てみて、読まされて、「あれ？」みたいな。「変なところがあるんだろうな。」って思ったけど、それ指摘されなかったんで。
>
> Before I came, I thought the tutor would just tell me what I needed to fix. I thought that the tutor would just read my essay and correct my writing. I was surprised when I, instead, was asked to read it out loud. I thought 'There must be somethings that need fixing,' but the tutor didn't fix my sentences. It was unexpected.

Another student added to this sentiment by expressing, ”表現とか見てほしいです。もっと自然な英語。“（“I want them to fix my expression, so that my English sounds more natural. That's what I want the tutor to do”）. Further, few students expressed their discontent about being asked to read their paper out loud (a popular writing center practice) in a session, as one student explained:

> スピーチの練習に来たんじゃないんだから読んで直してほしい。なんで読まされなきゃいけないのか意味が分からない。

> Ideally, I would like the tutor to read my paper and tell me what and where to fix. I didn't come here for a speech practice. I just don't understand why I had to read the paper out loud.

But, other students are starting to see the value of such an activity, as another student explained:

> 最初は面倒くさいなと思いました。３０分しかないんだから直してもらったほうが効率良いかなと。でも、ここだと（チューターと）二人で直していくって感じで、自分で発見する（のがいい）。
>
> At first, I thought it was annoying. We only have thirty minutes, so I thought it would be more efficient if they could just fix my writing. But, I've come to think that it is better to be able to learn how to solve problem than getting it right once.

These comments suggest that while student writers have a certain level of respect towards writing tutors because of their role as a provider of instruction, they expect to receive a particular service from the writing center, so that they can get better grades. Nevertheless, some student writers are beginning to see the values of the process based approach to writing pedagogy and to see beyond an immediate goal of getting good grades. Finally, the native-speaker aspect draws students into the writing center as one student explains, "英語がちょっと好きになって、しゃべりたいなっていうのも将来的にあるからネイティブの先生と話したい。（学校の外では）あまり機会がない。"（"I come here because I want to eventually become fluent in English. There aren't many opportunities to practice with native speakers outside of the center. Here, I can talk to them one-on-one"）. With its strong emphasis on language learning, the writing center at John Calvin University

seems to attract student writers who want to improve their target language abilities through writing related activities.

John Calvin University Writing Support Center offers its service only to second language writers. In this context, international students are in a unique setting in which they can receive writing conferencing in both English and Japanese as learners of multiple languages. One such student offered an interesting contrast between English and Japanese tutors, in which she described the difference between the two as follows:

> 私は英語が全然上手じゃないとおもんですけど、私が「違うんじゃないか」と聞かないとほとんど教えてくれないですよ。もうちょっと上の表現があるじゃないですか、大人の表現ていうか。もうちょっとネイティブっぽい表現を使いたいですけど、なかなか教えてくれないし、自分が聞かないと教えてくれない。日本語は文法が韓国語と同じだからほとんど自分でできます。韓国でしか使わない表現を自分で聞いたこともあるし、先生も教えてくれたます。
>
> I don't think my English is particularly good, but the English tutors don't usually correct my writing unless I ask, "Isn't this wrong?" There are expressions that make your English more natural sounding. Expressions that make you sound more grown-up. I want to use native-like expressions, but they don't teach us that. Because Japanese grammatical structure is similar to Korean. I can do Japanese writing almost all by myself. I have asked the Japanese tutors about whether or not a Korean expression was the same in Japanese. The Japanese tutors also often teach me new expressions.

This is an example in which writing center pedagogy is caught in the directive/non-directive lore. While the writing center belief advocates for the student to be in control of a tutoring session, the tutee does not feel completely satisfied unless her needs are met. Although the writing center aims to cultivate independent learners, the student's needs are more immediate, such as receiving a language input in order to get a better grade. Nevertheless, there is evidence that the writing center attracts student writers who are seeking a place to discuss writing, as another international student explained:

> 外国人はすぐに日本のレポートの構成とかすぐに書けない。言葉もかけないし。日本語のクラスでも教えていたけどそんなに詳しくない。（ここは）先生と一対一で何でも聞いてもいいのでやりやすい。いつも来て、来ないと、「ああどうしようかな。何から始めればいいかな。どういう流れで書けばいいかな。」といつも悩んでいます。来てから先生と相談してすぐ書けます。
>
> It's hard for international students to write academic papers in Japanese. Organization is one thing, but the language itself is difficult. We study writing in the Japanese language classes, but they not in depth. I have a hard time picking my topics and don't usually know where to start my essay. I often come here right away when I have a new writing assignment. I can start writing after I talk with a tutor.

It is difficult for some international students who are enrolled in content classes with other Japanese students not to fall behind because of language related challenges. For those students, writing centers serve as a buffer between a large classroom and what may seem like a solitary (activity of writing.

The writing center at John Calvin University rests on a balance between *method* and *site.* It is a *method* because of its clientele base of second language learners, and the center is

expected by the student writers and tutors themselves to provide explicit instruction on language related issues. On the other hand, it acts as a safe place (i.e., *site*) for language learner to practice their target language with native speakers. Also, in terms of process of writing, the writing center provide the learners with opportunities to understand assignment requirements and discuss options for topics. As the name suggests, the center provide supports to second language writers, but their support is not limited to writing essay, but it includes making sure that the student are on the right track to be successful (in terms of fulfilling academic and language learning goals).

Western University

The Writing Center at Western University is unique in a sense that it primarily offers tutoring for Japanese writing. Other Japanese writing centers, in general, offer English writing support as part of language education or are attached to a particular English language course. However, Western University Writing Center project began explicitly to provide support in Japanese academic writing.

The writing center is located in the university library. In the planning and preparation phase, the library director (at the time) was named the writing center committee chair by the chancellor. It is unclear whether or not the library came to house the writing center because of that particular connection. However, the university officials agreed that library is suitable for such a center because students from all majors use it. The original proposal stated that the writing center was to be run in coordination with the Education Department, however, the library became the sole department in charge of its daily operation. Among those who were involved in the preparation, no one had any experiences (neither as tutors or users) with writing centers. Furthermore, the university asked to create and open a writing center,

but there was no budget. The library covered the cost (specifically, to pay the tutors) for the first year. From the second year, writing center budget was allocated from the central administration. Although the library director is listed as the director of the writing center, he is not involved in the everyday operation, nor does he visit the center. Under the director, there are two assistant directors. One is the assistant director of the library (who also does not visit the writing center) and the other is a faculty member who offers English writing support to students and faculty. Additionally, there is a division of the library which administers writing seminars and other center related activities, as well as public relations.

At the time of the interviews, the center was housed in its third location since opening two years prior. In fact, in the first year, writing conferences were conducted in a corner of a group learning space in the library. Because the space was communal and available to any students, tutors greeted student writers in the entrance area and took them in the back to have conversations about writing. The second location was dedicated to the tutoring service aspect of the writing center, however, since there were no partitions, the staff felt that the space was not suitable for conferencing. After the second negotiation with the university, the center acquired the current location. Although it is located in the library, it is clearly separated from other aspects of the library services. After entering the library, those who wished to visit are directed by the signs and arrows pointing to the writing center. Once they enter the center through the sliding door, they are immediately greeted by the tutors who are working the shift as there are no receptionist staff. The visitors will, then, find brochures and posters about upcoming seminars and tips for writing. There are two tutoring booths, a desk for the faculty supervisor, and a communal desk space. The space is

dedicated to the writing center activities, and because of this, the term “center” is appropriate (as oppose to the time when tutoring was offered in a communal space).

Anyone who is interested in becoming a tutor will first take a graduate-level course, *Academic Writing and How to Teach it* (学術論文の書き方と指導法, my translation). This course is open to any students who are interested in learning academic writing. For example on average, out of 40 registered students, a quarter to one third of students will become writing center tutors. Others take the course to improve their own writing and to prepare for an academic track job. New hires will attend a New Tutor’s Orientation (新人研修) at the beginning of the semester. The New Tutor’s Orientation is a two-day training module taught and run by veteran tutors, and it includes: discussion of writing center beliefs; session observations and a trial; and effective teaching of grammar and mechanics.

Because there were no faculty supervisor when the writing center began, tutor training has always been done by more experienced tutors. Although the notion of *senpai* and *co-hai (*先輩、後輩意識 or an old-timer (or more experienced) and new-comer mindset) is not particularly strong, there is a collective attitude and practice where older generation tutors would teach and mentor younger generation tutors. This mindset may be particular to Japanese culture. While it may be similar to the idea of apprenticeship, the more-experienced is not necessarily a master of a particular group. They are generally older than the new-comers and have had a longer period of practice and experience in a given situation. The center incorporates the system of on-the-job-training (OJT). For example, when a new tutor begins meeting student writers, there is a one month period where a veteran tutor will sit in during a session. The experiences tutor does not generally talk, but s/he will provide support if needed and give suggestions after the session.

The writing center philosophy at Western University emphasizes the notion of education (rather than language teaching), thus, the tutor training course is taught through the education department. As the administrator explained, the university began the writing center project with its aim to use academic writing as a communicative tools. Because the majority of the students at Western University would be writing in Japanese, it made sense to offer Japanese tutoring services. However, because of the university's emphasis on globalization, there were growing pressure to include services to support English writing, as well as numerous requests from students to begin English tutoring services. In addition to conferencing on Japanese writing, the center offers seminars in English writing and runs a program which promotes international distribution (through publication) of research done at Western University. As previously mentioned, the faculty supervisor offered one-on-one support in English writing at the time of the interviews, however, the writing center has expanded its service to offering conferencing on English writing in the Japanese language. In terms of the types of work, then, although the notion of stigmatization (as opposed to the American counterpart) is not present, the writing center must incorporate various activities to legitimatize its work.

Tutors at Western University meet once a week to discuss challenging sessions and to discuss effective tutoring strategies, so that the tutoring sessions across the center are consistent, in terms of approach and quality. "ここでは[こういうふうに書かないといけない]とかは言いません。"（"We don't tell the users what to do," explains one of the tutor. She continues:

> チューターが一方的にしゃべるんじゃなくて、書き手を促してしゃべってもらう。相手に話してもらえば相手が自分で結論を考えて話すことになる。そ

のセッションではいい文章ができるかもしれないけど、一時的にその問題を解決する代わりに、これから問題が出たらどうしたらいいとか考えれたらいい。

We have conversations here at the center. Through talking about their writing, the writer will have to come to some conclusions about their topic. The session might help the writer complete that particular paper they are working on, but I want the writer to think further about how they might go about solving problems related to writing.

Because the Western University writing center tutors are those who completed an elective, training seminar, they can naturally be described as those who are interested either in teaching or in teaching of writing. Thus, they are not necessarily interested in instilling students with particular beliefs or particular ways of approaching learning. Rather, they are interested in being a part of the tutee's learning processes. One tutor, whose background was in developmental psychology, compared tutoring with counseling. In counseling, the counselor helps realize what the participant is thinking unconsciously through conversations. After realizing his or her hidden thoughts, then the participant him/herself would decide what s/he should do next. Once he began tutoring, he learned that the tutor does not provide answers, but together, the tutor and the tutee find answers and cultivate the writer's ability to compose. In this sense, tutoring and counseling are similar.

Another idea that surfaced during the interviews was the notion of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC). Although term did not necessarily come up, the WAC notion was prevalent in the tutoring practices of the writing center at Western University. Although the majority of the users come from the College of Letters and Science, student writers from

other discourse communities, such as math and engineering, visit the writing center time to time. One tutor explained a specific strategy to work with student writer in such a case:

> まず文章を音読してもらう前に内容を説明してもらいます。一分ぐらいで。専門用語が出たら必ず確認します。
>
> I usually ask the tutee to explain what the paper is about before asking to read it out loud. If there are some technical jargon that I don't understand, I will make sure to ask them to explain it to me.

Tutors discuss openly with the tutee about the difference in academic discipline. In fact, the tutee is asked to specify the conventions of written genres in their discipline, which deepen the student writer's genre awareness and puts him or her in control of the tutoring session. The faculty supervisor also wants to emphasize the WAC approach to teaching of writing at the center, as he explained:

> ライティング指導は何か専門的な知識がある人にやっていほしいと思っている。その知識がある人じゃないとできないと思っている。そうすると、留学生はその分野の人じゃないとサポートできないと思っている。専門的じゃない人でもできることはたくさんあるんですよ、っている認識が高まればもっと利用者が増えるんじゃないかと思う。
>
> Many student writers feel that writing in a particular field can be only taught by people who have content knowledge about the specific field. I want our audience to know that there are many things that writing tutors can do even if they may not be knowledgeable about disciplines outside of their own. Once students realize that, I believe the number of users will increase.

Such attitude is indicative of the writing center's potential to expand its writing sponsorship role at Western University.

Writing Centers as Sponsor of writing

The comparison revealed that even though the concept of writing centers is US based, the perception and ideology of the idea is local. The examination of the two centers made possible to characterize the writing center practices more accurately and to understand that the practices are specific to academic tasks at a given institution. The three way contrast been (1) English and Japanese tutoring and (2) a bilingual and a monolingual writing center has revealed that the writing center practices in Japanese universities rest on the balance between the idea of the center as a *site* and a *method*. Because of their immersion in the traditional approach to teaching, Japanese students are not opposed to the idea of drilling exercises or being explicitly told how to perform a task. The interviews revealed, in fact, that some Japanese students prefer receiving explicit instructions from the tutor. Thus, writing centers in the Japanese context can be understood as a *method*. Nevertheless, the interviews revealed that opportunities to write nor to discuss not only writing as a product, but also as a process is abundant in Japanese universities. The writing center provide a space where Japanese university students can advance their understanding of their content knowledge and explore their thinking through the conversations about writing. In this sense, the aforementioned (see Literature Review), "conversation of mankind" (Bruffee) is the idea that underlies the writing center practices, therefore, it becomes a *site*. The interviews also revealed that writing centers are acting as a platform for collaboration between writing educators in terms of professional development and tutor training. Writing center administrators and educators are reaching out outside of the organized conferences, such as

Writing Centers Association of Japan, to reach out to others who are teaching writing in various disciplines.

Writing conferences as more personalized approach to teaching writing began in the US to help US student writers who were struggling to write and became tied with the WAC movement in the 1970s. Although teaching of writing itself is at a developmental phase, the tutoring practices at Western University demonstrates that the WAC movement is beginning to take roots in the Japanese higher educational context. In accordance with the global trend of adopting English as an international language, many Japanese universities to emphasize English education. However, the reality is that the number of Japanese educators who can teach writing in English is scarce. Although the faculty supervisor of writing center at Western University explains that the teaching of Japanese writing (instead of English writing) is a default approach because of the lack of educators who can teach English writing, it can be viewed as an advancement in terms of helping Japanese university students become critical thinkers through the teaching of writing in their native language.

The comparison between writing centers at John Calvin University and Western University revealed an interesting contrast in ways the idea of writing center is realized. At John Calvin University, the writing center is primarily acting as a language center in which offers support in second language writing and a place to receive one-on-one practices in the target language. On the other hand, Western University Writing Center incorporates the WAC approach to teaching of writing. The comparison between the two types of writing centers revealed the potential affordance of writing education.

In a sense, writing centers are transforming Japanese higher education. The spread of writing education which was instigated by the writing center movement is changing the way

knowledge is created, transmitted, and transformed in Japan. In writing, Japanese students are expected to discuss opinions and make arguments, rather than simply knowing the information. Writing education in Japan is in a developing phase. However, the comparison between a bilingual and a monolingual writing center revealed the changing ideologies of higher education in Japan.

VIII. Chapter VII

What is a Writing Center? – An Activity Perspective

This chapter explores Japanese university writing centers from an activity perspective. Activity theory allows researchers to dissect and examine a given research topic from a subject's perspective. An activity may be understood (or defined) differently by the institution in which the activity occurs and the subject who participates in it. In the case of this present research, an activity theory perspective makes visible how student writers (subject) engage in writing activities for various reasons (object) at a specialized location which bears its own mission that is likely be influenced by an American model of writing centers. For example, a student writer may visit the writing center during the process of completing an assignment for a course in order to get credit and a grade. There could also be an alternative example that could highlight different motivation, such as personal enrichment through writing activities. On the other hand, the writing center may be focused on nurturing independent student writers through tutor-tutee conversations about the process of writing. In other words, in what activity the student writer thinks s/he is engaged; how s/he perceives it is organized; and how s/he participates in it may not be aligned with how the institution intends the activity to be. These differences may be highlighted in a traditional classroom in which the intention of the students and the teacher may not necessarily be in agreement. However, because writing center work is an optional activity in which student writers choose to participate either voluntarily or in response to a suggestion by an instructor, its work and purpose become more open-ended and less defined. An activity framework allows the researcher to consider 1). How the writing centers at John Calvin University and Western University define their mission, and 2). How these missions

are realized (or not realized) by daily practices of individual tutors. While a writing center as an institution may operate under a single mission, the actual daily practice of the center may vary in quality and focus. For example, the center might function as a system to help students clean up their grammar, or it can be a place for student writers to incubate ideas; and to become more comfortable with writing through interacting with their texts and conversation with the tutors. As for the student writers who use the writing center, in addition to the difference between extrinsic (e.g., getting a good grade) and intrinsic (e.g., personal enrichment) motivations, they may be working on different aspects of writing ability, such as understanding persuasiveness or improving grammar. Further, the writing center at John Calvin University targets student writers who are writing in a second (or third and more) language. In this context, writing as an activity may be used differently from a Using activity theory as a lens, this section examines how Japanese university students at two institutions develop writing ability in different social, political, and institutional contexts.

This section extend the discussion of university writing education in Japan from Chapter Three by considering: 1) How the concept of "academic writing" gets operationalized through writing center practices, and 2) The types of writing that are being discussed at the writing center. By focusing on how individuals accomplish writing activities through interacting with others, this section illustrates the processes of how matriculated student writers learn academic writing as a genre. Nevertheless, purpose of writing for individual student writers vary. While many students practice academic writing specifically for the purpose of successfully completing course work, others learn it for personal purposes, such as improving a target language skill. By adopting an activity perspective,

which may view writing center as a site of a specialized activity systems (namely, an academic writing activity), this section also examines how academic writing influences other writing activities.

Academic Writing in Writing Centers

This section discusses academic writing in English and Japanese at Japanese universities. As part of a popular orientation towards globalization, many Japanese universities emphasize English education as part of their curricula. In this setting, academic English writing is taught as part of language education. As for Japanese writing, the two major audiences are 1). International students who are studying Japanese as a second language and 2). Native-Japanese speaking students who are perceived (by the university) as inexperienced writers. As previously mentioned, teaching of writing in many instances occurs mainly in language classrooms. However, some Japanese universities are beginning to offer writing instruction in Japanese for Japanese native students. Universities are beginning to recognize a heightened sense of alarm for the quality of writing produced by Japanese student writers. These students lack experience because they are asked to produce reports or to write extended prose in an academic context for the first time. Whether it is taught in English or Japanese, specialized courses in writing are relatively new and began to appear on Japanese university campuses in the 2000s. This coincides with the time period when writing centers began to spread and is another indication that the writing center movement is impacting how knowledge gets transmitted in the Japanese higher education.

As the review of history of Japanese education revealed, Japanese students are not typically asked to compose analytical essays throughout primary and secondary school

years, however, there is some evidence of writing requirements that calls for critical thinking. One administrator explained:

> Japanese university students are often asked to write reports in lower division courses, but generally speaking, there are no writing courses to teach how to do that. Students usually learn how to write from the *senpai* in their seminar or once they get to their senior thesis stage, they will learn from their faculty advisor.

Up until the point of entry into the university, Japanese students are primarily tested on their ability to memorize and recount content knowledge. Yet, once at the university, they are asked to write reports without receiving explicit instruction about how to produce this particular genre. Naturally, they turn to the upperclassmen (and women) and faculty advisors in their community for guidance. The knowledge about writing at the university, then, gets passed down in small pockets of individual institutions and the modes and quality of instruction may vary. Although not all departments of institutions of higher education require senior theses from their undergraduates, this informal approach to teaching writing results in a wide range of senior thesis papers, whose aim is to demonstrate cumulative knowledge from four years of undergraduate education. Because there are no general education requirements to include teaching of writing at a lower-division level across Japan, while some institutions are beginning to offer writing instruction as part of a freshman seminar, others are turning to the idea of writing centers as a site where student writers get oriented to academic writing as an activity.

To begin, what does it mean to write academically? Because an act of writing may be new to many students entering into the university level of education and to educators who

did not necessarily formally study writing as a subject, the definition of academic writing is vague as one educator told:

> 一般的には大学で書く、学術的な文章を書けることになるっていうことなんだろうけども、アカデミックライティングと言えばいいのか、テクニカルライティングと言えばいいのかすごく悩む。でも大学だから、アカデミックだよな、と。それに関しては、日本では「アカデミックライティング」という概念は浮いていると思う。なんとなくみんなが思っているというか。
>
> I think the term “academic writing” is generally understood as writing you produce at the university level, but I am not sure if it should be categorized as “academic” or “technical” writing, but since it is at the university, I think it is probably “academic.” I think, in Japan, the concept of “academic writing” itself is superficial and no one really knows what it is.

The term academic writing entered Japanese universities through the English for Specific (specifically, Academic) Purposes (ESP) facet of English education. Although the likelihood of Japanese university graduates to use English outside of the academy is small, English writing is taught under the name of academic writing in many Japanese universities. When asked about the needs to teach academic writing, one educator answered as follows:

> 実際にアカデミックライティングをする人を育てている大学は、日本は英語使用者が大卒でも非常に少ない国なので、Email ライティングをする人はいるかもしれないが、アカデミックライティングをする人は少ないと思う。
>
> 日本のアカデミックライティングは英語教育の一環ではもちろんある。長い間そうであったし、終わりのところの目的が明確になっていない、使うとい

う目的が明確化できない。先生は「これは大事だよ」と教えるときに言ってしまう。そういう Encouragement も必要だが、本当に必要があることを保証できない。だから英語教育の一環としてこういう書き方があるんだということ、それからルールがきっちりしていて、厳しいルールだがそれを覚えるということは何かしら別のトレーニングになるとは思う。英語力の応用力も広がる可能性もある。文章力、文を書く力、あるいは文法力が付くということも期待できる。なので、アカデミックライティングというファイナルプロダクツが実際になくても、プロセスを学ぶことが、そのプロセスの中で学んでいくもの、例えば我慢強さや記憶などに意味があると思う。なので、今のアカデミックライティングが英語教育の一環であると考えると、まさしくその通り。

In reality, there aren't very many writers who will be doing "academic" (English) writing after graduation because there are only a small amount of college graduates who will use English after college. They might do some e-mail writing in English, but the purpose for teaching of academic English writing is not particularly clear. English instructors may say to their students, "Writing is important". That kind of encouragement is effective in teaching, but you can't really guarantee as to why writing is necessary. That is why we emphasize writing as part of English education, rather than writing as a subject. Also, there are rules to academic writing, and by learning those strict conventions, it might lead to other benefits. For example, you might be able to improve your English, ability to compose ideas, and grammar skills. You might not be working towards academic writing as a final product, but there are

things you can learn from practicing the process of writing, for example, perseverance and ability to memorize. That is why, if you ask me if academic writing is part of English education, I would agree it is.

Although academic English writing might not have direct implications for every Japanese university student, the motivation behind teaching it is based on the belief that the act of learning to write itself will advance the student's ability to develop as learners. While the concept of academic wiring is abstract, however, both those who teach (including the tutors) and student writers have ideas about what academic writing should look like.

Academic writing is understood as a "pattern," which is also described as paragraph writing. Writing educators feel that this "pattern" can act as scaffolding for university students to expand their ability to think, for example:

最近特に思うのは、パラグラフライティングっていう「型」っていうのすごく大事で、型を知ることで読み方も変わるし、聞き方も変わる。ある程度、型を意識して書いていくことで、ある「枠」を作ってあげることで、調理法というか。だから、「ただやれ。」とか「何回もやれ。」ということではなくて、ある一定の方を知ってきちんと書き込むということも、初年次に大事かなと思う。ただ「考えなさい。」といっても、ただの井戸端会議みたいになってしまうので、そこをどう制限の中で、時間と字数の中でやれるようになるかというのも、ひとつの考える力としては大事な部分かと思う。

I've been thinking lately that the "shape" of paragraph writing is important. By knowing this "shape", students will be able to read [academic papers] and listen [to lectures] better. Rather than giving a complete freedom, I think it is important to

provide that framework, especially during their first year. If you just say “just think,” it may just as well be a gossip, but I think they need to learn to be able to express their thinking in writing within a certain set of constraints, such as due dates and page numbers.

Another educator expanded the discussion of “shape” to a larger structure of academic writing:

ライティングっていうのはやっぱり決まったストラクチャーがあって、何を伝えたいかっていうのが大事なので、文レベルで間違っているとか間違っていないというのは後の話。やはり、もっと例えば学部生でちゃんと学んでほしいのは大きなストラクチャーとかパラグラフで各パラグラフで内容を伝えるだとか、まずは考えをまとめて、まとまりとして自分の考えを効果的に相手にわかるように伝える。ライティングをそのようなものとしてとらえてほしい。だから、感じるのはライティングっていったときに英語のライティングだったら、文法の間違いを気にする学生もいて、それは日本の高校までの英語教育が原因かも知らないが、そこの意識を変えるというか、ライティングっていうのは考えを伝えるために決まった構成にしたがって、まとまりで考えるものなんだよ、と。そこをどうやって教えるかということはすごく考える。

When you consider “(academic) writing,” I want my students to know that there is a certain structure that you must follow. Focusing on a sentence level mistake is a problem. At the undergraduate level, students should focus on learning structures of writing and paragraph writing. They also need to organize their thinking and present

> their argument effectively and clearly. I want them to think of writing as a way of organizing their thinking. The tendency to scrutinize grammar might be the results of English education in Japan, but what I want to stress is the larger, structure of writing. For example, each paragraph contains a main idea. I think there needs to be a paradigm shift about teaching writing. You need to organize your thoughts, and you employ a certain structure to convey your thoughts as a whole.

Both quotes (above) emphasize the notion of writing as an activity, whose object is to extend discussions and communicate meanings, and writers accomplish that by following the conventions and requirements of certain genres. These conventions afford the writer to free him/herself from the challenge of figuring out the best possible ways to communicate their meanings. Rather, by conforming to the expectations of a certain genre, it affords the writer to transmit their thoughts and ideas effectively and efficiently.

The interviews revealed that Japanese student writers are becoming aware of the expectations of academic writing as a genre. Few student writers described the difference between Japanese *sakubun* (personal essays that focus on feelings and emotions) writing and English academic writing by pointing out that in English writing, the writer needs to state a thesis up front and s/he need to focus on communicate clearly throughout a written paper. Although the concepts of academic writing is clear, it is challenging for Japanese student writers to adapt to that particular way of thinking. One student explained:

> 書くことが決まっちゃっているところ（が違う）じゃないですか。最初に決めて途中で変わらない。だらだらと物語を書いていればいつまででも書き続けられるじゃないですか。そういうものでもない。一貫して、ひとつの考え方にへばりついて書いていかないといけないから、縛られたくない自分にと

ってはつらいです。物事にはいろいろな考え方があって。特に日本人的な感覚からすると、形容だとか回り道をして最後に味のあるものをポンッと、わかるような読み物が好きなんで。最初にそれを持ってくる。こうだからこうなんだっていう書き方が嫌いですね。

[The difference between Japanese writing and English writing is that] there is an expectation about how you write [in English papers]. You state your thesis first, and you stick to your opinion throughout. If you were writing a story, you could go to many directions and that is why you could write forever. But, academic writing is not like that. You have to state a single, most important idea and you have to stay on topic, and that is challenging for me. There could be many ways to thing about a single subject. I think it is tough, especially from a Japanese cultural stand point, because we enjoy writing that is descriptive, yet implicit or a kind of writing in which the meaning is revealed at the end in an artistic fashion. I don't like how I have to make an argument and spend the rest of the paper proving my point in an academic paper.

Adapting one approach to written communication is one challenge, but when writing in a second language, student writers also have to learn how the target language works. In the comment below, the informant explained how the teaching of academic writing entered Japan through English language education. These English classrooms used to be the only context for academic writing for many student writers (unless a student continued his/her study into graduate work in a scientific field). In recent years, however, Japanese universities are starting to recognize a relative lack of opportunities to practice academic writing in undergraduate education as a whole and beginning to offer instructions in

academic writing in Japanese. In the process of introducing academic writing to Japanese student, Japanese universities adapted the English genre, and its organization and conventions had influenced the teaching of Japanese writing in an academic setting. Yet, the two languages are fundamentally different at a syntactical level.

> Japanese academic writing is modeled after English academic writing. Basically, the aim of academic writing is to communicate clearly. Also, having one idea per sentence is important. In Japanese, the way the subject of the sentence interact with the verb is a bit different from English writing.

Whether they are writing in English or Japanese, Japanese student writers (and international students who come from language backgrounds other than English) face the challenges of adapting a new way to structure their thoughts and to compose sentences, so that while every sentence contributes to conveying one major idea, each sentence is independent.

The notion of academic writing is relatively new in Japanese higher education, and there are many challenges students have to overcome to become successful as academic writers. Academic writing is a complex activity, as one educator explained:

> アカデミックライティングって普通の人が思っているような、テキストとか書かれたものだけじゃないということだと思っている。研究者のレベルや大学院生のレベルになると、例えばどういうジャーナルに自分の論文を投稿するのかというレベルの話をしていると、そのジャーナルのエディターの求めるものをわかってないといけない。後、同じ理系の中でも
>
> Engineering と Life Science と、理系の中でもいろんな違いがあるとおもうが、分野の中にいる中でのメンバーの共通意識とか、こういうことはみんな知っているとか、こういうことが常識とか、やはり分野によって違って、理

系になかでもいろいろ違いがあると思う。じぶんの Dissertation のなかでも、授業で書くペーパーであっても課題を出している先生が何を求めているか、この先生は何を求めているんだろう、というそういうことを重視するとか、読み手はだれなのかとか。授業で書くものかとか、学会のレベルでどこかに投稿しようとしているのかとか、いろんなことがかかわってくるので、アカデミックライティングというのは非常に複雑な行動だと思う。

I think academic writing is different from what people think about writing. For example, if you are a researcher or a graduate student who regularly submit their writing to academic journals, you would have to know what the journal editor is looking for. Also, within a scientific community, there are engineering and life science subcategories. You would have to be aware of the common practices and knowledge of their own discourse communities. You need to consider the social side of writing. For example, if you were a Ph.D candidate writing a dissertation or an undergraduate writing a term paper, you would have to understand what the assignment or the instructor is asking you to do. You also need to consider your audience and think, for example, about whether or not you are writing for a class or a conference presentation. That is why academic writing is a complex activity.

Teaching academic writing at a university level in Japan may be challenging because 1) although some universities are taking initiatives to offering instructions in academic writing, there has been no tradition of teaching writing at this level, and 2) in order to educate student writers whose writing experiences differ greatly from the complex activities of academic writing, it calls for a personalized instruction, in which student writers can received personal attention. In this context, tutors at writing centers can serve as surrogates

with whom student writers can have conversations about the genre of writing they are being asked to produce and for what purpose, and who the audiences are for that particular genre.

This section presented the idea of academic writing and how it is understood in the Japanese context. The interviews illustrate that there is an influence from Western practices and institutions. However, student writers, tutors, and administrators assign their own interpretations to the idea, which suggests that the situation is in flux. The following section continues to examine the writing center activities by considering different types of writing that student writers bring to the center.

Types of Writing at Writing Centers

Because John Calvin University writing center offers support in L2 writing, many of the writing assignments that the student writers bring in are from language classrooms. A few higher (language) level student writers, however, used the writing center to discuss papers they were writing for their majors or for a senior thesis. As the previous sections illustrated, higher (language) level students were able to engage in more substantive conversations about writing compared, for example, with a conversation that mainly focused on local errors. When student writers were able to address more global concerns, these conference sessions became a different type of event from what could be called an editing session, and during those events, student writers were active negotiators of the topics to be discussed. These examples show that the kinds of writing conferencing activities can range widely from a language instruction to having a conversation about how different disciplines use writing differently to communicate with members of their community. On the contrary, Western University offers writing conferencing in the Japanese language. While many student writers bring in assignments from freshman seminar courses, others are working on

papers that are tied to specific majors. Although student writers' voices may not be reflected because of the research design, the tutors at Western University discussed how they were becoming increasingly aware about the ways various discourse communities use writing to achieve particular purposes. As these examples illustrate for many Japanese university students who may otherwise not receive writing instruction, the writing center can serve as a location where they can become aware of their disciplinary identities through the conversations they have about writing.

The interviews revealed, however, that Japanese university student writers are using the writing center for purposes other than academic ones. It is true that many student writers do visit the writing center in order to improve their academic writing ability, so that they can either simply pass a course to get credit or to achieve academic excellence. On the other hand, other students go to the writing center in order to meet their personal goals. While Japanese university students' motivation (or awareness) to write is increasing, their purpose for writing varies. In many cases, it is driven by the need to secure employment upon graduation. Based on the statistics published by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology – Japan in April 2016, 73.8 percent of graduates of post-secondary institutions of learning intended to enter the workforce. It is a common practice for Japanese corporations to require a written document named "entry sheet" from their job applicants. In order to write this "entry sheet," university students are advised by their *senpai* (upperclassmen/women with whom they have a mentor-mentee relationship) to discuss extracurricular activities and types of part-time job they held while studying. Thus, although Japanese university students tend to spend the majority of secondary school life preparing

for a college entrance, once they enter the university, their focus tend to shift to social and working lives.

Another phenomenon that is deterring Japanese university students from being immersed in an academic life is their wish to belong to a more socially accepted group. One educator explained:

> 真剣に勉強するひとを「意識高い系」という名前がついている。「意識高い系」にはなりたくない、と。「いいじゃん、意識が高いってことは。」というと、「いや、なりたくない。」と。だから、バイトやサークルで頑張ったことを書いて、先生からも「勉強だけじゃダメなんだ。」というようなことを言われると。
>
> I learned [from taking to my students that] those who study hard are named "those with high level of awareness". I asked my students, "Isn't that a good thing?" Then, they say, "No, I don't want to be recognized. That's why I put my effort into extracurricular activities and part-time jobs, so that my prospective employers will value me. Also, professors tell me, 'Knowing your subject is not enough'. That's why I don't care to study".

The informant pointed out, however, this attitude is not universal across Japan. She explained that her students would express a sense of admiration towards *todaisee* (students at Tokyo University) and would not insult them. This suggests that there is an awareness among Japanese university students that certain paths are laid out for the elites who attend the top universities and it is important for the others to fit into the socially accepted norm.

Writing in the Changing Context

Japan has entered (since the 1990s) period where there is a university for every applicant who seeks education at the post-secondary level. While the competition to enter the top institutions remains extremely competitive, many Japanese universities are scrambling to gather enough numbers of incoming students. English education is an area which many Japanese universities emphasize in order to appeal to the next generation of incoming students. English education, in turn, has acted as a channel for writing education to which many Japanese institutions of higher education are starting to pay attention. While Japanese university students and university graduates may not have immediately need to write English papers outside of the university, student writers can gain lessons they can apply to other writing situations from learning to write academically. Some might pursue an academic career, in which they will be required to write academically. Others might be asked to write emails in a work setting. In either case, the writer must compose with the most prominent idea in mind and a way to communicate that piece of information in the most efficient and effective manner. Academic writing certainly teaches such lessons, yet, teaching of writing in a classroom setting has many constraints for such a complex activity. The writing center affords personal interactions, through which academic writing as a typified, tool-mediated action get operationalized. Further, student writers become aware of their audience through their experiences working with the tutor. Whether they are coming to the writing center to improve academic writing or to get feedback on a "entry sheet," Japanese university student writers (as well as international students who are studying Japan) are becoming accustom to and adapting the conditions and expectation of a collective

through their engagement with writing activities, including their conversations with the tutor.

IX. Conclusion

Discussion

The study

The purpose of this study was to understand how the US-born idea of writing centers had entered and is spreading in the Japanese higher educational system. Through an examination of two writing centers, this study aimed to find answers to the question: How do the tutor's and the tutee's expectations and orientations guide their participation in the writing center practices? Data collection was twofold. Ethnographic data, including video observation of tutor-tutee conversations and interviews, was collected at John Calvin University (primary research site). The Writing Support Center at John Calvin University offers writing conferencing in English and Japanese. In this setting, writing in both languages are taught as second languages. Additional interview data was collected from Western University (secondary site). Western University Writing Center offers writing conferencing in Japanese language for both native speakers and international students who are learning to write in Japanese as a second language.

This study adopts institutional ethnography and an "ecology of writing" (Syverson, 1999) as frameworks to deconstruct how writing center practices may impact a student writer's development of writing abilities and, in turn, how writing centers could serve as sponsors of writing. Institutional ethnography allows researchers to make visible how a participant's definition of an institution does (or does not) match the institution's own, and how the participant navigate him or herself within the constraints of the institution to improve their lives. The current study examined whether or not a writing center's own (or self-described) purposes served the needs of student writers who came to the center. If not,

were student writers using the center with their own mission? In terms of an ecology of writing, the purpose of this study was to make visible where does a student writer's participation in writing center practices sit within his or her trajectory of writing development across the lifespan. In other words, this project at an individual student level, is a mapping project that helps understand roles of writing centers in their development of writing.

Literate Histories

Drawing on Bazerman's work on *lifespan development of writing* (forthcoming) and Prior's (1998) notion of *literate activity*, this dissertation introduces the concept of *literate histories* as a way of looking into a student writer's path to becoming a type of writer he or she is at a particular time in his or her lifelong history of literacy activities. The concept of *lifespan* writing development (Bazerman) provides a framework for understanding how individuals form their identities as particular types of writers at varying level and degrees of participation in social, cultural and other contexts through activities of writing. The lifespan approach makes visible that writing development is complex because writing, as a rhetorical device, is complex, and each one of developing writers comes to form varying levels of relationship with writing under unique circumstances. Bazerman (forthcoming) introduces literacy narratives, such as autobiographies, as a way to characterize a writer's relationship with writing. As these examples suggest, there are multiple dimensions that could influence a writer's development. The word *history* as a singular form does not encompass the complexities of the writer's story. Thus, the plural form – *histories* - expands the possibilities of social, cultural, and institutional influences that the writer may encounter in his or her developmental path of writing.

Prior's (1998) discussion of academic writing task provided a scaffolding for the concept of *literate histories.* Throughout their school lives, student writers are oriented towards rhetorical situations that call for particular actions in appropriate ways. Prior (1998) writes:

> Whose perspective best represents the *academic writing task*? I would argue that our understanding of academic writing tasks needs to embody *both* the kind of complex microhistories of situated action, perception, and evaluation that I have only thinly sketched here *and* the strategic interpretive work that renders such histories typical, unexceptional, practically invisible to participants. (Prior, 63)

A personal history provides clues to understand how one comes to view or evaluate a particular rhetorical situation, and he or she might make decisions about how they may approach an exigency based on the previous experience in a similar condition. When learning to produce a text in a new genre that he or she has not created before, a student may draw from those previous experiences and look for a model elsewhere. By becoming his or her own historian of literate activities, a student writer can begin to connect the invisible dots of intertextuality and understand how a certain text enters into a particular situation and gets over, perhaps, to form another genre.

Literate histories provides a framework to recognize how individual student writers get exposed to certain genres and makes visible the social aspects of that exposure to that genre (for example, who was involved and what was the context for learning). The trajectory of these *histo*ries is not a linear one. It is about locating an individual writer's locale (in terms of physical location as well as a trajectory of writing development across a lifetime) and mapping on an ecology of writing. It is also about an individual student's positioning of

him or herself within such an ecology. *Literate histories* provides a language to start discussing a student writer's development as a writer in relation to social and historical aspects of writing. In terms of writing center research, this approach provides an infrastructure to start to understand what writing centers mean to individual student writers.

History is contingent. An activity that has a particular meaning for one person might have a completely different purpose or significance for another. This study builds on a preliminary study which traced the history of writing education in Japan. The previous study provided a guiding question for this present study, What does it mean to be literate in a changing society? Definitions of literacy is a complex question as students may enter and navigate through the literacy needs of schooling with different cultural background and orientation towards reading and writing. Further, depending on the context (or no context) of learning to write, each student writer will have a completely different experience with activities related to writing. Thus, literacy means different things for individual student writers.

The concept of *literate histories* provides a way to discuss how student writers of diverse backgrounds enter the writing center and the personal histories they bring with them. It provides a language to make a connection between individual student writers' history and the history of the writing center intersect. Further, it can be used as a framework to understand how an individual student writer's experience with the writing center help define the role of the center.

When writing center practices are considered, there are at least four levels of history at play. First, we, as researchers, must understand the history of the writing center that is being studied. Questions to consider when thinking about the history of the center are: How

did the center get started? When? By whom? For what purpose? And, who provides funding? In John Calvin University's case, it was the director who proposed the idea of opening a writing center. The ideas was welcomed by the superiors, and after the first year, which was funded by a special program budget, the center became a permanent (unless it gets canceled sometime in the future) operation receiving funds to offer tutoring services on a regular basis. On the other hand, opening of Western University's writing center was a top-down process. The library official was appointed by the university administration to open and run a writing center. In contrary to John Calvin University' case, whose writing center was operated by the director who had previously been involved in writing center practices (thus, he was familiar with running a writing center), starting a writing center at Western University involved research and training staff who had never been to or heard of the writing center until they were appointed to work on this project. These background information also helps to explain the values that are reflected in the writing center practices. In John Calvin University's case, it was the director's vision which reflects his belief about helping students become independent writers, and Western University saw the writing center as an opportunity to improve students' writing abilities in order to become a global university (by increasing a publication rate, for example).

The second level of history that calls for attention is the personal histories of the student writers who use the writing center. What system of schooling has a student writer attended? What kind of writing instruction has he or she received? What writing activities does he or she engage in and outside of school? An interesting example was Shiraishi's case. He entered the John Calvin School System as a junior high student. At the age of 12, he had experienced an entrance examination in order to get admitted to the private schooling

program. He then continued onto the high school program without taking an examination because of the escalator system. He would have been eligible to continue on the escalator system to enroll in the university program. However, he left the system for five years. He then tested back into the system as an untraditional student. Perhaps because he had previously attended the John Calvin School System as junior and high school student, having those gap years did not seem to affect him in terms of acculturation to John Calvin school cultures, for example. In fact, because he was mature, he had a clear career goal upon his graduation from John Calvin University (He wants to become a public servant) compared to other (but not all) students who vaguely described their future career goals and interest. Additionally, because Shiraishi had experienced John Calvin schooling which places an emphasis on English education, he also discussed his ease of conversing with native speakers, which may have made a difference in ways he responded to tutor's expectations (such as requesting student writer's to read their papers out loud) compared to others who may have not had much interactions with English speakers.

The next level of history is an academic history. A question at this level is, at what point of a student's academic career does he or she decides to use the writing center? While many of the visitors who came to use the writing center at John Calvin University were freshman writers who were learning to write academic papers for the first time, Wakamiya was a senior working on a thesis paper. (Because writing is assigned as part of the English Core classes, instructors for these classes recommend their students to come to the writing center.) Writing a senior thesis is not a degree requirement, however, as Wakamiya explained, she wanted to challenge herself to write an extended paper in English. The topic of her thesis came out of a class she took, and while she was working closely with her

faculty advisor on her paper, she used the writing center frequently to get additional help from writing tutors. As for the tutors at Western University, they were being immersed in the writing center practices as providers of tutoring services. Through conversations they have about writing with the tutees who come from different disciplines, Miura and Zahar, in particular, discussed how their own involvement with the writing center work was helping them become aware of the ways writing is used across disciplines. Further, they explained that having been exposed to writing from different disciplines, they were beginning to enact their own disciplinary identities through their understanding of writing requirements that their disciplines call for.

The final, more intimate level of history has to do with the relationship a student writer might form with writing tutors. The writing center experience may become a brief impression for those who visits the writing center once and never returns; however, those who decide to come back may develop a lasting relationship with a particular tutor or with the center itself. Writing center visits then become a student writer's part of their writing routine. This relational aspect of literate histories reinforces the idea that writing is a social activity. Many student writers may consider writing as an isolated, solitary activity. However, once they incorporate writing center visits as part of their own writing processes, writers may realize through their interactions with the tutors that writing gets constructed through conversation with others and themselves.

My own *literate histories* guided my research throughout the process and became a lens for my analysis. I would not have become interested in writing center research if I had not experienced the two education systems and interacted with student writers as a writing tutor. However, as a researcher, I must step away from ethnocentrisms and approach my

questions objectively. A framework adapted from an institutional ethnography allowed me to go "beyond [my] own experience" (Smith, 2006, p.1) and view writing center practices as activities that enter an individual student writer's lifelong trajectory of writing development.

The Context – Global Trajectory of the Writing Center

Writing center practices have its roots in the American progressive education movement in the 1920s when educators began emphasizing the experiential and social aspects of learning and university writing classroom began incorporating personalized instruction. The American higher education, in its modern history, has observed a sudden surge of student population at different points in time, and each moment of expansion invited an outcry from within and outside of the academia that American college students could not write. Writing centers, which were once an embodiment of progressive education, became a repository for student writers whose writing abilities were deemed inadequate for higher education, and writing center practices became associated with remedial work. Because many writing centers ran under auspices of an English department (or other departments, such as libraries) often with an approach that incorporates drilling exercises, these sites of one-one-one instruction became to bear names as English clinics or English department housewives. Despite these stigmatization, writing tutoring practices expanded through the dedicated work of writing center professionals, and there are either locations or services that offer one-on-one writing instruction in almost all American college and university campuses. Nearly a century has passed since the beginning of the orientation towards personalized writing instruction, and in the present day, writing center practices have spread to other parts of the word including Europe, South America, and Asia. This study examined how writing center practices were transforming (or not transforming)

writing education in the global context by focusing an attention on the roles of writing centers in the Japanese university setting. Specifically, through an ethnographic study of a bilingual writing center which offered one-on-one writing conferencing in Japanese and English as second languages, the current research aimed to understand whether or not tutors' as well as tutees' cultural expectations guided their participation in the writing center practices? Further, were those cultural expectations helpful, and if so, in what way? And, to whom were they helpful? The findings from the ethnographic study site was compared and contrasted with interview data from a secondary site, from which tutors participated to discuss their tutoring practices and their beliefs about one-on-one writing instruction. This concluding chapter synthesizes these finding from the two sites and situate writing center practices within the current direction of teaching of writing in the Japanese higher education in order to understand the underlining questions: What is academic writing? What does it mean to be *literate* in this changing 21st century context?

In order to further the discussion on the roles of writing centers, the following section will first recapitulate the current practices of teaching of writing in and how writing centers entered Japanese higher education.

Teaching of writing and writing centers in Japanese universities

In contrary to the American setting where every college student receive a formal writing instruction at some point in their academic career, Japanese university students are often left to unravel the complex processes of writing on their own or with very little help from others. This study builds on a preliminary, historical study of the Japanese education system which revealed that the system of Japanese higher education in the post-World War II era expended in tandem with corporations, and a diploma from a prestigious university

had guaranteed a graduate's successful career path. Because an entry into a notable institution became an educational goal for many students and their parents, college entrance examination became incredibly competitive. Thusly, secondary school curricula became academic-oriented (while primary schools have entirely different curricula which focus on whole person education) and students were socialized into an academic environment that is built on the basis of academic rivalry. Under such a climate, test taking skills and memorization became mainstream focus of education and left little room for writing education which can teach analytical thinking and logical approaches to problem solving. While the notion of *sakubun* (composition) writing is familiar to Japanese students, those essays generally focus on feeling and emotions associated with a particular event, for example. Many Japanese students, to this day, are graduating from high school without opportunities to engage in critical thinking in the form of writing at a school setting. Japan had entered a mass education era when many high school graduates will seek post-secondary education at various institutions of higher education. While not all students will enter an academic and/or research track, problems associated with the lack of experience with writing is becoming visible in a university setting where students are required to turn in term papers and file theses for graduation.

Through conversations with Japanese writing educators at the university level, this research revealed familiar stories (to US-based writing professional) of professors lamenting that their students could not write. Moreover, for many years, there had not been a system in place that taught academic writing to those underprepared student writers. In the past fifteen years, however, a new movement began spreading in university campuses across Japan. The first writing center opened its door to Japanese university student writers in 2004 when

Waseda University, a private, prestigious university in Tokyo, began offering one-on-one writing instruction services. The center, in fact, had a predecessor whose focus was to offer English language help to those students who were required to write in the second language. However, the center shifted its focus on writing instruction under the leadership of a new (and current) director and began offering one-on-one writing conferencing services in Japanese and English languages. (In response to the growing number of Chinese international students, the center has expanded services to offer tutoring in the Chinese language.) What guided this transformation from a language center to a writing center was the director's belief that "no matter what language they are writing in, many writers think in their native language." (書き手は母語で考える。). This approach to second and foreign language teaching that is rooted in Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development was advanced by Jim Lantolf, Professor of Language Acquisition and Applied Linguistics, however, whether or not the director was influenced by this line of thinking is unclear. Nevertheless, at the center, student writers can choose to work with tutors who can discuss writing in the target language or their native language, and when the students' ability to communicate are no longer limited by their language skills of their target languages, they can truly begin to discuss their writing and thinking that goes into writing. In this sense, Waseda University, specifically the director, was the pioneer that brought the idea of the writing center to Japan. This "idea" is that the center is a location where tutors and tutees have conversation about writing. A few other Japanese universities have adapted this model (that is writing center as a *method*) since then, and there are over a dozen writing centers across Japan.

Through an examination of writing centers, this study aimed to unpack the current practices of writing education in the Japanese higher education. Although it is beginning to change, writing is not formally taught at the university level. Thus, in the Japanese setting, the activity of and activities related to writing are most salient in writing center practices. Using American examples as points of comparison, multifaceted functions of writing centers in Japan will be highlighted in the following sections.

*Ro*les of Writing Centers in Japanese Higher Education

The writing center practices in Japan were imported form the U.S. by writing educators who were either U.S. educated Japanese or American writing teachers who have used or had familiarity with writing center practices. Through their experiences, they were, in a sense, converted to the belief that the writing center's mission is to help student writers become independent writers. This notion of "independence," however, contradicts with the Japanese orientation towards group harmony from the beginning. How, then, are Japanese student writers understanding the roles of writing centers to be?

Because the writing center at John Calvin University offered conferencing in second language writing, the target language level of student writers who visited varied. Lower (language) level students expected to receive editing services and were surprised when they were asked to participate in writing conferencing activities, such as reading their paper out loud or discussing their writing processes. Higher (language) level students, however, were eager to participate in conversations and asked questions more actively. While lower (language) level students associated writing tutors with the roles of teachers who would direct and correct their learning, higher (language) level students viewed writing tutors to take on other roles, such as more capable (or knowledgeable) peers or a parental figure who

they can talk to about challenges of living in a foreign country, for example. While it was difficult for lower (language) level students to view the tutors and the services that the writing center offered beyond the constraints of a school setting (that is a school is a place where you receive instructions), higher (language) level students were more flexible about their definitions of the writing center.

On the contract, the writing center at Western University portrayed practices that were closer to the US model. These practices includes emphasis on the process of writing and an orientation towards Writing Across the Curriculum. Because Western University offered writing conferencing in the students' native language tutors may have been able to engage in more substantive conversations about writing (in the cases of international students who visited the center, they were writing in a second language. However, most students were native speakers of Japanese), for example, how a particular discipline communicates through specific ways of writing. These approaches not only helped student writers who visited the writing center, but also were beneficial to writing tutors who were increasingly becoming aware of the literacy practices of different discourse communities, and they were able to continue to grow as writers while they worked as writing tutors.

Intricate practices of writing centers get even more complex when the language factor is added. In Japan, English is recognized as a language of international communication, and many Japanese student writers (especially those who are in the STEM fields and/or those who attend universities that places emphasis on a global perspective) are being required to write in this second language. Further, a number of international students, especially from Asian countries are increasing. In a culture where writing in higher

education is not traditionally taught, writing center professionals are taking on the role of writing experts who are shaping the teaching of writing in Japanese higher education.

In the late 2000s, writing center professionals in Japan have organized themselves to form a conference that has been meeting every year and offering a forum for teachers of writing to interact and learn from each other. This conference, whose original focus was on teaching of English writing, has attracted teachers from different disciplines and is now informing the way Japanese writing is taught at the university level. For example, through there may be variations across disciplines, academic Japanese writing has adapted the IMRaD (Introduction-Methods-Results-Discussion) organization, features that are seen in academic English writing, specifically in the scientific fields. Further, Japanese student writers are also taught to compose, so that each sentence has one idea (一文一義, *ichibun ichigi*, "One sentence, one meaning," my translation) and each paragraph is centered on a single topic. These features of Japanese academic writing are strikingly similar to some rhetorical strategies taught in American writing classrooms. In contrast, because the traditional *sakubun* (composition) writing emphasizes impressions of an event or an experience, the reader may not know the writer's intention until the end of a paragraph. Thus, the writing center movement that entered the Japanese higher education is now changing the way knowledge is being created, transformed, and finally transmitted through the activities of writing centers and beyond.

Cultural Expectation that Shape Writing Center Practices in the US and Japan: A Comparison and Contrast

From the U.S. perspective, the writing center is a support system that often aids underachieving or multilingual student writers who would benefit from additional resources

outside of the classroom. Although writing center practices emphasizes the social aspects of writing and their services are available to students of all level of academic excellence and achievement, the idea of going to the writing center is often stigmatized because of its historical ties to remediation. It is true that many US writing center have been advocating an alternative view of the writing center that is writing center as an opportunity or a recourse that would propel a student writer's potential and that contributes to the overall development of the mind. However, because of the ways the writing centers are interpreted differently by different actors, the Japanese attitudes towards the writing center may help expand the dentitions of the writing center. For example, while there were certainly students who were strongly recommended from their instructors to visit the writing center for additional help, there was a unifying sentiment among the students who participated in the study at John Calvin University that the bilingual writing center was a resource that could assist them in the development of skills related to writing, as well as communicative skills as users of the target language. In the case of Western University, the tutors who participated in the study felt that the students who visit the writing center are those who are self-motivated and are intrinsically interested in discussing writing. However, while the sentiment associated with participation in writing center activities are mostly positive, some Japanese students want to distance themselves from the writing center because of its association with motivated students.

An interesting finding that may add to the reasons for not to participate in writing activities is the attitude towards their fellow student writers who use the writing center. While the American attitude may be neutral, some Japanese students, especially those attending mid-range universities distance themselves from writing center activities because

participating in such enterprise would draw unwanted attention from their peers. If they were to participate in writing center activities, it may be an effort that involves the members of an entire clique, and once one person decide to drop, the other members will suspend their activities with the writing center. For example, one of the educators shared a story about her student who suddenly stopped coming to the writing center. When she asked the student why she stopped visiting, she responded by saying that she did not want to be excluded from a group of her close friends because she was spending too much time coming to the writing center and not participating in group activities, such as going shopping together. Although this example alone may be too isolated to make a cultural statement about Japan, however, it may illustrate Japanese students' orientation towards group harmony that is instilled through schooling, specifically primary schooling. While individual success may be emphasized in the American practice, the cultural and societal expectations that guide the Japanese students' participation in writing centers activities stem from their inclination for belonging to a group.

This Japanese example of not wanting to participate in the writing center activities because of their group mentality presents an interesting paradox. Although group harmony may be a value that is most cherished in the Japanese society, Japanese students are required to participate in a competitive school culture, especially after they advance to a junior high school level. If Japanese students corresponds to the schooling system that places values on ranking, why would they not want to use a resource (i.e., writing center) that would help them propel when they finally enter a university after a lifelong preparation to take the college entrance exam? While these Japanese do not want to use the writing center because such an activity would make them stand out and disturb group harmony, the other reason

may have to do with their positioning of themselves in the hierarchy of the competitive education system.

Throughout their school lives, Japanese students are sorted into multiple tracks as well as tiers of education that would have an influence on their future as academics, workers, or those who fulfill other responsibilities in the society. The first phase of this sorting begins at a junior high school level where students are advised to take entrance examinations to high schools according to their level of academic achievement. Upon an entry into high school, Japanese students often choose their track that emphasis different goals (e.g., successful entry into a public/national university) and skills (e.g., English language skills). This tracking predetermines the type of universities and colleges (or other professional schools) that the Japanese students will pursue and enter after high school. Learning for each group means different things; for those aiming to enter a university, learning means to cram in as many facts and other information as possible. And those who are entering into professional schooling gain practical skills that would help them function as working members of the society.

While the competitive system provides opportunities to some students, it is also limiting to others. What this means is that Japanese students are placed a cap at each level of schooling. Once students are placed in a track, they do not foresee themselves exceeding the expectation of their track. This applies to the universities where some of the elite institutions are expected to produce the nation's political and business leaders, as well as researchers and scientists. Students who attend other more regional, low to mid-range universities will likely remain in the local communities upon graduation. Japanese students, as well as educators, are well aware of their limits. It is true that, in no matter what systems they find

themselves, those Japanese students will be competing against each other. However, Japanese students' identities may be conflicted in a peer culture that imposes conformity. (See the previous discussion on 意識高い系 - "those with high level of awareness.") In this particular culture which presents contradictions at different levels, the idea of the writing center and its approaches may be able to offer an alternative learning experience in higher education that may otherwise be limiting to Japanese students.

Because writing centers are at a relatively early stage of the development, its movement may have a potential to alter the Japanese university students' attitudes towards learning. For example, Japanese writing centers could emphasize the social aspects of writing and act as a hub for student writers at various stages of their writing development. In this space, Japanese student writers are no longer limited to their constraints of the career path that their education can afford. They can be part of a community of practice that is not necessarily bounded by their academic discipline, but they are connected as peers and as writers in their particular university setting. In such a definition, the writing center can truly be a sponsor of writing who would provide student writers opportunities to experience and experiment with writing through their interaction with text and with other fellow writers.

Conclusion

As a writing professional, I am constantly trying to find answers to the question: How can student writers learn to write? The present study aimed to understand how writing centers could serve as sponsors of writing to students writers who are being socialized into a particular way of writing, specifically academic writing. This dissertation presented findings from ethnographic as well as interview studies that took place mainly at two Japanese university sites. (An additional sub-interview study was conducted at additional sites.) While

a study of Japanese writing centers may seem irrelevant to the US context, it can provide an insight into how the idea of writing centers are conceived at a foreign context, and in turn, it can potentially expand the definition(s) of writing centers. In other words, studying the writing center in a foreign context allows writing center researchers to make visible what a center can afford. While a sense of stigmatization is often attached to a discussion of writing centers in the US setting, this particular study presents an alternative version of the writing center. In this view, the writing center practices are no longer viewed as remedial work, but as a resource that can help student writers continue to make progress in their lifelong trajectory of writing development. Thus, the writing center practices could enhance the learning experiences of the student writers who visits the center. The aim of this study was to make visible these learning experiences and what student writers are learning by analyzing the conversations between the tutors and the tutees, as well as post-conferencing interviews.

Writing center researchers have called on the needs to employ replicable, aggregable, data-supported (RAD) research (Haswell, 2005) in order to validate writing center practices. I hope to contribute to this effort through this research and to move the discussion of writing center forward to a global perspective by presenting the writing center practices in Japan. First-Year Writing is an American phenomenon in which every American college student at some point in his or her academic career receives writing instruction in a classroom setting. While Japanese universities are beginning to offer writing instruction at an individual campus level, there is currently no organized system (or standardized curricula, for example) of teaching of writing across the nation. Thus, in this setting, writing centers may act as

surrogates who can offer personalized writing instruction through one-on-one writing conferencing.

While the definition of writing centers may continue to be associated with remediation in the U.S., this study provided an alternative view of the writing center. That is the writing center as a resource where student writers come with various purposes, bringing their own *literate histories*. Student writers' individual literate histories, however, are also intersecting the history of a particular writing center. The concept of *literate histories* might provide a way to expend the definitions of the writing center by understanding the individual student writers' experiences with writing, and in turn it might help enhance writing center practices.

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Appendix: Interview Questions

担当教員/ Director/Administrator：

1. センター設立に関する歴史、運営法について
    - Can you tell me about how the center got started? What were the forces that made the writing center happen?
    - Were there people in administration that support this idea?
    - Can you describe the institutional processes as to how the center was established?
    - Where is the money coming from? How stable is the money?
    - What sort of political support systems are there? Who runs the center? Under which department does the center belong?
      Which students does the center serve?

2. ほかのライティングセンターとのネットワークの有無
    - What sorts of networks related to writing centers are there in Japan?
    - Have you been in contact with other centers? In Japan or outside of Japan?
    - What is the ongoing relationship with other writing centers in Japan and outside of
    - Japan? How do you stay connected with other centers?

3. 担当教員個人のライティング教育の分野においての活動
    - Can you describe how you assumed the role of the director? How did you get involved with writing centers?

4. チューターのリクルート、指導の方法
    - How do you recruit writing tutors? What are your training methods/activities?
    - What materials do you use to train tutors? Who created them?
    - Have you developed any other materials that are used in the lab or training? What was the experience that made you create these materials? What were you hoping to accomplish?
    - Can you tell me about when and how the training occurs and what the ongoing supervision is like? How many students do they serve?

5. 担当教員という立場以外でのライティングセンターとの関係
    - Could you tell me your own experiences with writing centers?
    - As a student, did you use writing centers?
    - How do you stay current with writing center issues? What journals do you read to stay informed about writing education in Japan?

6. 自身のライティングに関する経験、プロセスについて
    - What do you write? What genre?
    - Can you describe your writing processes? Where do you write? With whom? When? With what (technology)?

7. アカデミックライティングに求められるものとは（担当教員の見方）

- What is your opinion about learning to write? Is it a necessary skill? Why? For whom? In what language?
- What skills and qualities do you think are necessary to write academically? How is academic writing different from other types of writing?
- What is your opinion about academic writing in Japan? What do Japanese university student writers have to be able to do?

チューター、スタッフ/ Tutors：

1. チューター／スタッフになるまでの経歴
   - How long have you worked as a writing tutor? How did you become a writing tutor?

2. 勤務の様子
   - Can you describe your work day at the writing center? When do you work? How long? What do you do in-between sessions?

3. 日本人学生ライターの特徴
   - Generally speaking, how do you describe a Japanese student writer? What are their strengths/weaknesses?

4. チューター指導について （方法、回数、役割）
   - Please tell me about tutor training.
   - How often do you receive tutor training?
   - Do you collaborate with other tutors?
   - Are there any training materials?

5. チュータリングの成功例
   - Can you describe a successful session?
   - Why is that a successful example?

6. センターを利用する学生との関係について
   - How do you describe your relationship with the tutee?

7. チュータリング以外のセンターにおいての役割
   - Do you have other responsibilities other than tutoring at the center? What are they?

8. 自身のライティングに関する経験、プロセスについて
   - What do you write? What genre?
   - Can you describe your writing processes? Where do you write? With whom? When? With what (technology)?

9. アカデミックライティングに求められるものとは （チューターの見方）
   - What is your opinion about learning to write? Is it a necessary skill? Why? For whom? In what language?

- What skills and qualities do you think are necessary to write academically? How is academic writing different from other types of writing?
- What is your opinion about academic writing in Japan? What do Japanese university student writers have to be able to do?

センターを利用する学群生、交換留学生/ Students：

1. Information about the student:
   - What year? Major?
   - What classes are you currently taking? What are the writing requirements for each course?
   - What were the entrance examination like? Were there any writing components?

2. センター利用について （頻度、回数, 理由など）
   - How often do you come to the center? First time?
   - Why do you come to the writing center?

3. センターに対する期待
   - What do you hope to get out of a tutoring session?

4. センターにおけるライティング指導方法と、ライティングクラスにおける指導方法の違い
   - What are the differences between working with a writing tutor and working with a writing teacher in a classroom?

5. セッションについて

a. 理想のチュータリングセッションとは
   - Can you describe an ideal tutoring session? You can either speak from your experience or describe with your own idea.

b. 満足のいかないセッションとは
   - Can you describe an unsuccessful session?

6. サポートセンターのチューターとの関係
   - Can you describe your relationship with your tutors (e.g., teacher and student, more capable peer, etc.)?

7. 自身のライティングに関する経験、プロセスについて
   - What is your opinion about learning to write? Is it a necessary skill? Why? For whom? In what language?
   - What do you write in/for and outside of school?
   - Can you describe your writing processes? Where do you write? With whom? When? With what (technology)?
   - At what point of your writing processes, do you come to the writing center? When do you think is the most effective time to see a tutor?
   - What do you do after coming to the writing center?

8. アカデミックライティングに求められるものとは（学群生、交換留学生の見方）What skills and qualities do you think are necessary to write academically?
    - How is academic writing different from other types of writing?